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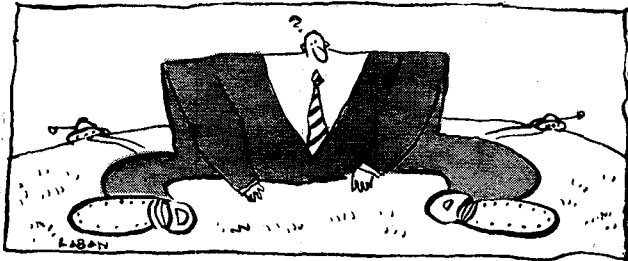
**One year after  
Tiananmen Square  
the old guard is cracking.**

**Marie Gottschalk reports**

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# A search for policy in Cold War's wake

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

Last spring, House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-MO) threw down the gauntlet. "The Bush foreign policy is a policy adrift: without vision, without imagination, without a guiding light save precious opinion polls," Gephardt told the Center for National Policy, a Democratic think tank, on March 6.

But three months later, President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker have been cautiously edging toward a post-Cold War foreign policy while Gephardt's Democrats lack vision and appear guided by no "light save precious opinion polls." During the recent Soviet-American summit, the Democrats played an entirely negative role, trying to derail Soviet-American trade agreements by linking them to Baltic independence and a Jewish emigration law.

Democrats insist they are holding high the banner of human rights. Early this month Rep. Richard Durbin (D-IL) described a trade-bill amendment tying American high-tech exports to Soviet negotiations on Lithuania as "a statement of the same principles on human rights which we have stood for in South Africa and around the world." But in fact the Democrats have been subordinating American diplomacy to outdated Cold War dramaturgy and petty partisan politics.

**Search for stability:** After two summits, Bush's Soviet policy is markedly different from that of Republican conservatives such as former Defense Department official Richard Perle. The conservatives want to weaken the Soviet Union, which they see as an implacable enemy. By contrast, Bush and Baker want to strengthen both Mikhail Gorbachov and his country.

The main threat to world peace, Bush told a June 3 press conference, "is unpredictability and instability." He and Baker see the Soviet Union under Gorbachov as an instrument of stability—whether internally or in Eastern Europe, the Far East, Southeast Asia and Africa.

The Bush-Baker strategy is beginning to resemble America's pre-Cold War policy of using the Soviet Union

as a counterweight to Germany and China as a counterweight to Japan. But the president's tilt toward Gorbachov and the Soviets is probably based less on long-term calculation than on the considerable benefits the U.S. has already gained from Gorbachov in Eastern Europe, Central America and possibly on the Korean peninsula. At the summit, Bush also got significant concessions from Gorbachov on arms control. A *Wall Street Journal* analysis described the START agreement as "lopsided in most respects in favor of the U.S."

In exchange, Bush has tried to accommodate Gorbachov's concerns about being isolated from both Europe and world capitalism. At the summit he made two important concessions to Gorbachov. He endorsed the idea of making the 35-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the body that drafted the 1975 Helsinki Accords, a functioning European organization that would include the Soviet Union. The CSCE would initially supplement NATO, but, as most foreign-policy experts recognize, it might eventually replace it.

Bush also signed a trade agreement granting the Soviet Union the same most-favored-nation status enjoyed by other American trading partners, including China and South Africa. The agreement will have few immediate repercussions (U.S.-Soviet trade is only about \$5 billion a year), but it is of enormous symbolic importance—it removes from the Soviet Union the list of Iran-like pariahs—and it opens the door to closer economic cooperation between the two countries. Without significant economic ties, the U.S. will have little influence over the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe in the decades ahead.

**Nationalist threat:** The Democrats, lacking a clear answer to the question of whether the U.S. should strengthen or weaken the Soviet Union, appear determined to sabotage this valuable trade agreement. Party leaders, backed by conservative Republicans, are demanding that before Soviet-American trade relations be normalized the Soviet Union begin negotiations with Lithuania and pass a law granting open emigration for Soviet Jews.

At Gorbachov's June 1 session with congressional leaders Democrats pressured Gorbachov on those issues, implying that they were the most important questions facing the world. Before the Soviet leader's visit, Bush had already caved in to Democratic demands on the emigration law. After the summit, when Bush insisted that the trade agreement be tied only to emigration and not to Lithuania, Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-ME) accused the administration of "effectively abandoning the Lithuanians."

Then, during the June 6 House debate on the Export Facilitation Act of 1990, which would have removed restrictions on high-tech exports to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the Democrats lowered the boom. Durbin introduced his amendment on Lithuania, and Rep. Mel Levine (D-CA) added a clause on Jewish emigration. Democrats quickly fell over each other to back the Durbin-Levine amendment. The only House member to speak against it was Rep. Bill Frenzel (R-MN). The amendment passed 390 to 24.

In demanding an emigration law, Democratic leaders claimed to be carrying out the 1974 Jackson-Vanik Act, which made most-favored-nation status contingent on open emigration, but Jackson-Vanik never required the Soviets or any other country to adopt an emigration law. In demanding a law, the Democrats have taken up the rallying cry of one narrow and noisy lobby and forced it on the Bush administration and the nation.

The requirement of a law was devised by the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, a Washington lobby whose mentor is former refusenik Anatoly (Natan) Scharansky, now an Israeli right winger. No major American Jewish organization has lobbied for such a law. And since early 1989, when Soviet Jews began to emigrate to Israel en masse, the American Jewish Congress and World Jewish Congress, as well as former Rep. Charles Vanik (D-OH), have backed granting the Soviet Union most-favored-nation status.

Democratic insistence that trade be tied to negotiations with Lithuania is equally unjustified. It abrogates the spirit of Jackson-Vanik, making the U.S. appear to be moving the goal post each time the Soviet Union advances down the field. Moreover, it places the U.S. on the side of instability in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe—which is not a minor consideration given this region's history.

Over the last year Gorbachov has had good reason for resisting Lithuania's unilateral declaration of independence: if he allows it to secede without protracted negotiations, he risks the dissolution of the Soviet Union as other nationalities, whose historic claims to independence are far weaker, jump on the Baltic bandwagon. In addition, if he now unconditionally acceded to Lithuanian demands, Gorbachov would jeopardize other Baltic minorities (see *In These Times*, April 18).

The U.S. and Western Europe also stand to lose if ethnonationalism gains hold in the Soviet Union and spreads westward. The tensions among Germans, Slavs, Czechs and Poles contributed to both world wars and to the Holocaust. Yet the Democrats are claiming to represent the interests of Eastern European and Soviet Jews at the same time that they they press the demands of ethnic nationalists. Perhaps the Democrats reason that if their support for national secession catches on, Eastern European Jews will need to have legally secured their right to emigrate.

**Gephardt's schizophrenia:** What has come over the party of George Kennan and George McGovern? In small part, the Democrats' position reflects the continuing influence of the old Henry Jackson wing, for whom the causes of Lithuania and Jewish emigration are only the latest chapters in the Cold War. Most Democrats, however, appear moved by more mundane political concerns. They are envious of Bush's ability to bathe himself in the glow of summit diplomacy, and they are still deathly afraid that Republicans and even other Democrats will charge them with being soft on Communism. Gephardt was a victim of these political fears.

In his March speech, he called for the U.S. to adopt a

## INSIDE STORY

new Marshall Plan and Peace Corps for Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. He also called for granting most-favored-nation status to the Soviet Union, waiving export controls and even sending food aid. For this he was bitterly denounced not only by Republicans but also by his own party. Washington Democratic consultant Ted Van Dyk accused him of "trying to find some hot button to push for his 1992 presidential campaign, the same way he tried using Japan-bashing in his campaign two years ago."

During subsequent months, Gephardt became increasingly gun-shy—even as Bush adopted many of his proposals. In recent weeks Gephardt appeared to change his position from one moment to the next.

During the congressional confrontation with Gorbachov, he championed Lithuania and Jewish emigration. Then, at a June 2 press conference, he backed Bush's trade agreement. "When you open up new economic ties, you gain new strings," he said. "If the Soviet tanks roll into Lithuania six months later, you take the trade privileges away." Four days later, he backed the Durbin-Levine amendment to the export facilitation act.

Gephardt's inability to develop an alternative either to Bush or the Cold War Democrats epitomizes the party's dilemma. After losing three presidential elections, the Democrats have lost their ability to think as a national governing party. In his brief tenure as House speaker, Jim Wright (D-TX) tried to restore that capacity, but with his departure the Democrats are now ruled by technocrats and trimmers.

In debating U.S.-Soviet relations, they resemble the Republicans of the mid-'40s, who found themselves out of their element, like rambunctious children at a poetry reading, as the U.S. faced a new set of foreign-policy challenges.

During the recent summit, the Democrats, many of whom had attacked the premises of the Cold War, seemed unprepared to operate outside of them. Meanwhile, former CIA Director Bush, whom they had accused of opportunism and vacuity, appeared ready to challenge and even transcend those premises.

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## Little hope for peace under Israel's right wings

By Aaron Back

**T**HREE MONTHS AGO, ISRAELI LABOR Party Chief Shimon Peres was a satisfied man. After orchestrating a parliamentary vote of no confidence that brought down the 15-month-old national unity government, Peres promised to quickly form a new coalition capable of advancing the peace process.

Labor ultimately failed in its attempt, and on June 4 the longest governmental crisis in Israel's history finally ended, leaving Peres and his party with little to celebrate. By a narrow margin of 62 out of 120 votes, Yitzhak Shamir's new right-wing coalition won the approval of the Knesset.

The new ruling coalition patched together by Shamir is by far the most hardline and extremist in Israel's history. Relying on support from the religious and nationalist right-wing parties, the government will bring a discernible rightward shift to national and foreign policy decision-making. As one portent of things to come, one day after the swearing in of his new Cabinet, Shamir announced plans to further develop existing settlements in the Occupied Territories.

For the first time since 1984, Likud is now in charge of a government unencumbered by Labor as a coalition partner. Nonetheless, Shamir admitted that his new government was not the one he had hoped for. Mindful of policy pressures, this time from his new right-wing coalition partners, Shamir vacillated until the last moment about renewing yet another pact with Labor.

It was the active presence of Construction and Housing Minister Ariel Sharon that forced Shamir to make a decision. Threatening an outright challenge for leadership of the Likud should Shamir decide to form another national unity government, Sharon forced Shamir's hand. Since Sharon controls the allocation of resources for housing construction in Israel and the Occupied Territories and has overall responsibility for coordinating immigration policy, he will be a driving force in the new government.

The new government says its highest priority will be the massive wave of Soviet immigration—not negotiations with Palestinians. More than 150,000 new immigrants are expected to arrive in Israel in the next year, with equal or higher numbers expected in following years. The enormous economic and social challenges posed in absorbing these numbers would occupy the attention of even a moderate government. With the right-wing coalition in charge, the focus on immigration concerns will likely be used as an excuse for further stalling in any peace process.

**Peace capabilities:** Likud supporters like to point to former Prime Minister Menachem Begin's peace accord with Egypt as evidence that Likud is capable of taking positive steps toward peace. It was Likud's unwillingness to answer positively to the conditions of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's peace initiative, however, that first brought down the national unity government three months ago. Moreover, Shamir, who abstained in the vote for the Camp David agreements, is now even more tightly constrained by the right-wing



MEIN GOLLY—I HOPE GEORGE BUSH VON'T CRITICIZE ME FOR ALLOWING MEINSELF TO BE CARRIED AWAY BY SOME SCREWY, RIGHT-VING FUNDAMENTALISTS!

parties that hold his narrow coalition in balance. Shamir has signaled no concrete or operative directions toward reinitiating the stalled peace process, choosing instead to voice his opposition to any negotiations with Palestinians beyond talks on autonomy.

In the months to come, Shamir will have to walk a fine line between satisfying the ideological cravings of the far right—including coalition supporters such as the Moledet Party, whose political platform calls for the

**The new ruling coalition patched together by Shamir is by far the most hardline and extremist in Israel's history and will undoubtedly bring a discernible rightward shift to national and foreign policy decisionmaking.**

"transfer" of Palestinians from the Occupied Territories—and risking further deterioration in ties with the U.S.

Within Israel, the wheeling and dealing of the political parties in the last three months has shaken the already weakened confidence of most citizens in their elected officials and system of government. The months of coalition negotiations by both Likud and Labor were characterized by defections of Knesset members from their party to the other camp in return for promises of government and ministerial posts and debt coverage.

The support of Israel's ultra-orthodox religious parties assumed pivotal importance in the efforts of both Labor and Likud to form a coalition. The rabbis and Talmudic scholars who lead these parties proved themselves consummate politicians, squeezing out as many shekels as possible for their religious institutions in return for their promises of support. Both Labor and Likud drained the national treasury of millions of dollars in special government allocations in attempts to buy the votes.

Given the rampant electoral bribery and blackmail of the past months, it was not surprising that most Israelis—Likud supporters among them—showed more enthusiasm for the World Cup soccer games being televised in Israel than in the latest government coalition development.

**Treating the symptoms:** Israeli disdain for politicians in general, and for the electoral system in particular, was expressed in widespread support for an electoral reform movement that evolved in the early weeks of the government crisis. Sensing the mood of the public, politicians from the major parties quickly leaped on the bandwagon and introduced into the Knesset a number of reform bills that include proposals for the direct election of the prime minister, constituent representation in the Knesset and additional reforms that would potentially lessen the strength of the numerous smaller parties.

While there is an unquestionable need for electoral reform, it is no panacea for Israel's primary ailment: the lack of consensus in the country for real movement toward peace. Only leadership with vision—which in Israel is in short supply nowadays—can help to forge that consensus.

Israeli liberals and peace proponents do see a glimmer of hope in Labor's new role

as a parliamentary opposition, joining with the already outspoken and vibrant smaller left parties. If Labor has any hope of reinvigorating its diminished strength, it must use its stint outside of the government to convince Israelis of the dangers of the current course and activate the majority of Israelis who support territorial compromise.

A younger generation of Labor doves publicly supports negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and even a number of centrist Labor leaders have supported the U.S.-PLO dialogue. Unfortunately, much of the energies within Labor will undoubtedly be directed inward, toward the impending struggle for party leadership. Hawkish former Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who is more popular than any other Israeli politician, has already announced his intention to challenge Peres for his position.

**No vacancy:** Regardless of the actions of Israeli politicians, the intifada will continue. Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are bracing themselves for the expected tightening of repressive policies.

It is still too early to predict how the Palestinian leadership will respond or to anticipate the responses of the movement in the streets. Many Palestinian leaders, however, believe that the hardline policies of the new government will strengthen the more radical Palestinian forces in the Occupied Territories, playing into the hands of the Israeli government.

In the months to come, Israel's new government—its 24th in 42 years—will offer numerous challenges to Palestinians in the Occupied Territories as well as to the peace forces in Israel. What it will not offer is any reason for optimism. □

**Aaron Back**, *Tikkun* magazine's Israel editor, is a research fellow at Hebrew University in Jerusalem.



By Joel Bleifuss

**Accomplices to crime**

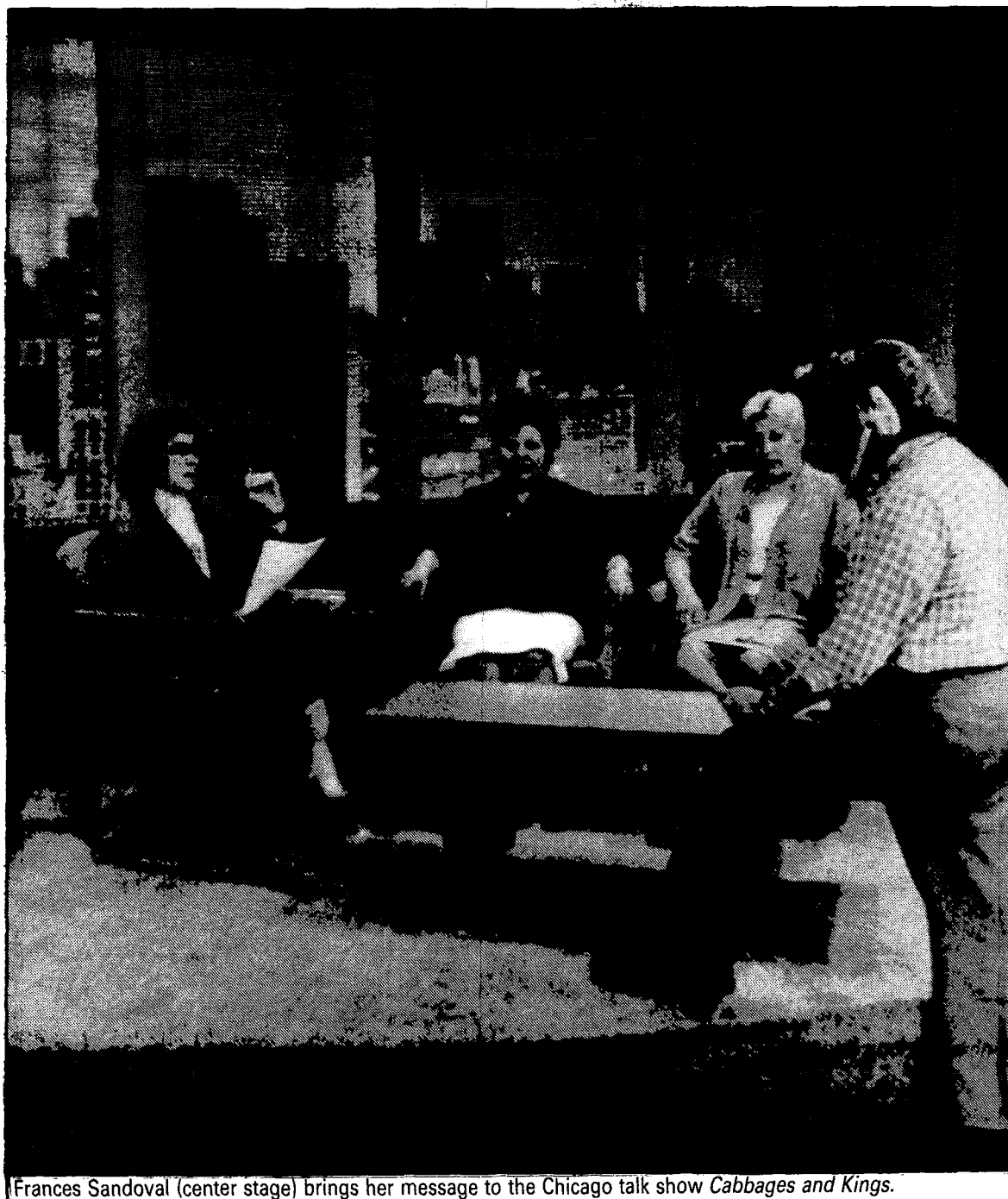
The Bush administration just can't say no to those criminals blessed with both money and connections. This spring Attorney General Richard Thornburgh withdrew his department's support of the U.S. Sentencing Commission's judicial guidelines that would have led to a crackdown on corporate crime. Those guidelines would have allowed federal courts to fine lawbreaking corporations millions of dollars and sentence white-collar crooks to long mandatory prison terms. But the corporate interests that bankroll the Republican Party relentlessly lobbied the White House, which in turn ordered Thornburgh to disavow the Justice Department's endorsement of the commission guidelines. Thornburgh obeyed and sent the proposal back to the commission, asking it to revise its recommendations. But no action is expected until next year, because President Bush has effectively hogtied the Sentencing Commission by failing to fill three vacancies on the seven-member board. Consequently, it should come as no surprise that the Justice Department is demonstrating little interest in bringing to justice those well-heeled individuals responsible for the collapse of the savings and loan (S&L) industry, a financial debacle that, according to the *Stanford Law and Policy Review*, could end up costing the U.S. taxpayer \$1.4 trillion—or approximately \$5,600 per man, woman and child in the U.S.

**Point of fact:** To combat this Justice Department inaction, Rep. Chuck Schumer, the Brooklyn Democrat who chairs the subcommittee on criminal justice, has gone on the attack. In May his office did some digging and issued a report titled "Fact Sheet on Prosecution in the Thrift Industry." Among Schumer's findings are the following:

- The FBI has asked for a total of 425 agents to investigate financial institution fraud, but the Justice Department has allocated money to fund only 202 agents—or 47 percent of the number requested. And these 202 agents will not be in the field in full force until August.
- The U.S. Attorneys' offices in March 1989 requested 231 new lawyers to prosecute financial fraud, but the Justice Department has allocated money to pay only 118 attorneys—or 51 percent of the number requested. As of March 1990, only 68 of the 118 positions had been filled.
- As of March 1989, the Justice Department had not acted on more than 2,300 cases of financial institution fraud.
- As of February 1990, the FBI had not investigated 234 reports of alleged misconduct, each involving losses of \$1 million or more.

**One of 1,000 points of lie:** When questioned about the Justice Department's apparent failure to prosecute S&L fraud, the department's deputy director of public affairs, Dan Eramian, told me the department was doing the best possible job, and that it couldn't do more due to lack of resources. "It is easy to say you should spend more money on something," he said, "but where is the money coming from?" His answer is one more example of the bald-faced truth-twisting that has become the hallmark of the Bush administration. Schumer's spokesman, Eric Hauser, expressed outrage at the Justice Department's comment. "Money is available," he said. "All the department has to do is say it needs it. The evidence incontrovertibly shows that Congress wants them to ask for it." Which raises the final point on Schumer's fact sheet: in the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery and Enforcement Act (FIRREA), the S&L bailout bill passed last August, Congress authorized \$75 million a year for three years to pay for the Justice Department's prosecution of S&L fraud. The Bush administration's response? It requested only \$50 million a year for three years. This is curious. Prior to the bill's passage, Thornburgh had announced that the Justice Department was not able to pursue one-third of its major bank-fraud cases because it didn't have the funds. And last month, Edward Dennis, the assistant attorney general in charge of the criminal division, told the subcommittee on criminal justice that his division could easily have spent the \$225 million Congress had originally authorized to prosecute S&L fraud. Dennis then added that he was "advised the president decided on the \$50 million [request]." It appears Bush was doing his best to ensure that the prediction Thornburgh had made to Congress early in 1989 would come to pass: "We'd be fooling ourselves to think that any substantial portion of these assets [looted from the thrifts] is going to be recovered."

**It's about time:** On May 25, 200 members of Congress signed onto a letter Rep. Schumer wrote to President Bush asking him to request \$100 million in additional funds for the Justice Department's prosecution of S&L fraud. All the signatories were Democrats. Hauser, Schumer's spokesman, explained, "Democrats are



Frances Sandoval (center stage) brings her message to the Chicago talk show *Cabbages and Kings*.

## Frances Sandoval: against the gangs

By Katharine Greider

No place is more familiar to Frances Sandoval than the Marquette Square neighborhood on Chicago's Lower West Side. Years ago, a stroll down those streets would bring memories of her childhood, growing up the third of six children in one of the first Mexican-American families to move to the area. Sandoval would also recall the early years of raising her own three children in this neighborhood on the border of Pilsen and Little Village. But five years ago another memory eclipsed the others. On a January afternoon in 1985, her first-born child bled to death on the snow-covered lawn of Spry Elementary School, a few blocks from Sandoval's childhood home. Arthur, 15, was stabbed in the heart by a gang member known as "Gypsy."

That loss prompted her to form Mothers Against Gangs (MAG). As a bereaved mother and longtime member of a community troubled by gangs, Sandoval is eminently qualified to speak for this group. But it is her personal dynamism that gives her words their gut-wrenching impact. Likewise, her political savvy has nurtured MAG's growth from an ad hoc support group to a multifaceted political organization. As a personality, Sandoval has drawn attention to the nationwide gang problem from the likes of *People* and the TV magazine show *Hard*

*Copy*. Chicago Police Captain Kenneth Anderson puts it this way: "Some people have it, and some people don't." Sandoval has it.

"Love him as an individual," Sandoval urges parents of gang members, "but stop washing his clothes. Stop ironing his clothes. Stop cooking. Withdraw. Show him. Give him that opportunity to make another choice." A regular on the lecture circuit, Sandoval talks about gangs and her dark, liquid eyes seek and hold each listener's gaze. As she relates anecdotes, she takes on the voices of disgusted fathers, despairing mothers, proud and indifferent teenagers. Then, suddenly, she is once again Frances Sandoval, telling her audience, in a Chicago accent buoyed by Latin inflections, that gangs kill. The strength of her conviction makes you nod in agreement.

In 1989, 72 Chicagoans died in gang clashes that one gang counselor describes as "a lot like little kids playing cops and robbers." This year the figure will likely be higher. Chicago Gang Crimes Unit Commander Solie Vincent says dwindling opportunities for black and Hispanic teenagers, a lucrative drug trade and "absolutely, positively, too many damn guns" feed gang violence. Sandoval is convinced that somebody's child was slated to die on that afternoon in 1985; her son Arthur just happened to be the one.

"There's no negotiating when it comes to a gang,"



is Sandoval's message to young people. "If you're in a gang, either you're going to be killed or you're going to be involved in a murder. Then you're going to jail, and that's just like being dead." For those unmoved by this prospect, she adds, "Some kids have the attitude 'If I get it, I get it.' What a copout! You're dead, it's over for you. You don't breathe. You don't hear. You don't feel. You have no pain. But what about your mother? The nightmare is just beginning for your family." She offers her own grief as a text, an irrefutable example.

The importance of political participation in communities ridden with gang violence is a constant refrain of Sandoval's campaign. She told teenagers in a clerical training course that by learning a trade they are making a statement "not just to yourselves but to the little children who are watching you." She asked them to report guns, drugs and incidents of gang intimidation in their neighborhood. She assured them that they can make a difference.

**Politicking:** To watch Sandoval in action you might imagine she was a born organizer, but she has worked hard to hone the necessary skills. She was only 16 when she married and gave birth to Arthur, followed closely by Lydia, now 20, and Vincent, 16. "It was being young and infatuated," she says, "And then all of the sudden it was growing up." After eight years of marriage, Sandoval divorced. She worked her way through Loop College as a data processor. Initially, she was embarrassed because she was older than the other students. "Oh my goodness, I said to myself, 'Look at all these young teenagers! How am I going to do this?' But I did it, and I'm quite proud of myself."

In 1980 Sandoval got a job as a receptionist for the Legal Assistance Foundation. She threw her weight behind the United Legal Workers and was elected to that union's executive board. In 1982 she spearheaded a Chicago petition drive to protest the Reagan administration's plan to cut legal services in half nationwide. When they were cut by only a third, she began to believe she could participate in the political system—and win.

Later that year Sandoval began campaigning for Juan Soliz in his bid for state representative. But he was knocked off the Democratic ballot on a technicality. At that point, says Sandoval, "I committed myself from the top of my head to the bottom of my shoes. I was angry." Sandoval ran Soliz' 1984 campaign, and he was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives. After Arthur's death, she reluctantly took up the challenge again and in 1986 managed Soliz' winning campaign for 25th Ward alderman. It was after this campaign that Sandoval founded MAG. Now much of her MAG organizing is part of her job as an administrator in Soliz' ward office.

When Sandoval's son was killed, the political system she had worked for and believed in abandoned her. As she sped down Marshall Boulevard toward the hospital, Sandoval noticed blood in the snow outside Spry Elementary School. She had no idea that it was Arthur's. Meanwhile, news of the killing was being televised, along with Arthur's photo from the Bogan High School identification card retrieved from his pocket. At the hospital Sandoval was told that if she didn't calm down, preferably by way of a tranquilizer shot, she would not be allowed to see her son's body.

Sandoval was spurred to action a few days later when a detective told her that no one was pursuing her son's killer. Gypsy had been identified by three other gang members who were involved in the fight that broke out when Arthur and his friend Peter went to Spry School to look for Peter's 12-year-old sister.

Sandoval knocked on doors looking for witnesses. She sought information about Gypsy from immigration services and the Mexican Embassy. She also went to local TV and radio stations to publicize her

offer of \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest of her son's killer.

Two weeks after Arthur's death, someone came forward and Gypsy was apprehended. After a long and harrowing trial, he was sentenced to 35 years in prison. "You get victimized twice," says Sandoval. "It's like, who's the criminal here?"

From the anguish of her ordeal comes the empathy so evident in Sandoval's advocacy of gang victims. She takes calls from victims at any time of the day or night. She sits with them in court and coaches them about how to take control of the system, as she did. MAG embraces those who fear for their children in gangs as well as the bereaved victims of gang violence. "When their kids are in gangs, some mothers are reluctant to call us. But some do and that's fine—we want them to call. They're still the victim, whether their son was a gang member or not. The pain is the same."

Despite MAG's open-door policy, Sandoval is powered not only by compassion but also bottomless fury against the perpetrators of gang violence. She is determined to draw distinctions between good guys and bad guys. "Hard-core gang members are a minority defaming our communities," she says. "Just because we were born in Cabrini or Henry Horner or Pilsen does not mean we were born to be in gangs." She urges parents, police officers, judges and prosecutors to "send the right message" to young people by exercising "zero tolerance" of gang crime. It galls her that gang killings are not pursued as diligently as other murders. Through MAG she plans to launch a nationwide public-education campaign on gang violence that, like those aimed at rape and drunk driving, will tell Americans about the plight of gang victims. "Twenty years ago if you were raped you asked for it. That was the attitude. And that is what we're talking about with gangs—attitude."

**Frying kids:** "Frances kills herself to provide support for people," says Father Larry Craig, who hosted MAG's first meetings in the rectory of his church. "She is a very good person." But Craig is troubled by what he sees as Sandoval's tendency to assign blame in ambiguous situations. "Sometimes I bury kids who are killed by gangs and then go to prison and counsel the killer. It's often a coincidence as to who did the shooting and who got shot. ... But the desire for vengeance is so strong that my position is not very popular," says Craig, who has worked with gangs for 20 years. "Frying kids" is not on his agenda.

For the first time, Sandoval is involved in a case in which she is supporting the state's recommendation that three young killers be executed. As the court advocate for Blanca Martinez, who lost two brothers four years ago when gang members tossed a jury-rigged explosive through their window as they slept, Sandoval sits with Martinez and her surviving brother and watches the sentencing hearing from behind a glass wall. As the judge's decision is put off once again, a defendant turns toward the public and grins. Outside the courtroom, Sandoval discusses the proceedings with Martinez, who sags, wrung out, against a wall, as her brother draws deeply on a cigarette.

Sandoval has little to say about the three young men who may face execution. When she speaks of the community they victimized, her tone is urgent. "Four kids were murdered in that immediate area within a two-year period," she says. "If no one had been apprehended, do you know what that would have done to that community? It would make them so apathetic. They would literally feel held hostage in a situation they could not change. What it would say to the children in that neighborhood is that life has no value—that Blanca Martinez' brothers weren't that important."

**Katharine Greider**, a former intern at *In These Times*, is looking for a newspaper job in the Northwest.

more outraged. It is a Republican administration that isn't doing anything." The letter read in part: "We are deeply concerned about the ability of the Department of Justice to effectively investigate and prosecute financial institution fraud and embezzlement cases. ... Mr. President, the American people are being asked to foot the bill of a bailout that may well exceed several hundred billion dollars [sic]. They demand in return that the criminals who looted the thrift industry be brought to justice. It is imperative that the government send a swift and sure message through prosecutions that the crime that helped to cripple the nation's thrift industry does not pay. Without an increased appropriation for the Department of Justice, it is inevitable that thousands of fraud and embezzlement crimes will remain unpunished." And what was the president's response? "Zippo," said Hauser.

**You don't say:** The administration may be delaying the prosecution of the S&L crooks for reasons other than gross incompetence. In addition to authorizing more money for prosecution, FIRREA, the August 1989 bailout bill, changed the law to increase the statute of limitations for bank fraud from five to 10 years. However, because of the ex post facto clause in the Constitution, those cases of fraud discovered by the Justice Department prior to August 1989 can be prosecuted only under the old law's five-year statute of limitations. Consequently, that statute will soon run out on the many cases of S&L fraud that the Justice Department has "investigated" since the mid '80s but failed to prosecute. The longer the Justice Department holds off in hunting down these corporate skunks, the greater the number who will slink away. For example, take presidential son Neil Bush, currently the subject of a federal investigation. He sat on the board of directors of Silverado Savings of Denver, a failed S&L that will cost the taxpayers \$1 to 1.7 billion to bail out. (See "The First Stone," June 6.) Congressional hearings last month revealed that the Office of Thrift Supervision informed the Justice Department of possible criminal activity at Silverado at least 11 times, beginning in 1986. Although the administration has refused to tell Congress the dates those referrals were made, it can be surmised that the statute of limitations on at least one of the 11 will run out next year.

### Safe for democracy

In 1965 the Indonesian army, then under the leadership of current Indonesian President Suharto, massacred an estimated 500,000 Indonesians (the CIA puts the figure at 250,000). The Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), at the time the third-largest Communist Party in the world, was annihilated. Although it has long been known that the U.S. government looked the other way while the blood flowed, new evidence suggests that the U.S. not only condoned the massacre but also actively participated in it. Investigator Kathy Kadane reports for States News Service that in 1965 high-ranking U.S. diplomats and CIA officials provided lists of PKI members to the Indonesian army. Robert Martens, a former political officer at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta who now is a consultant to the State Department, told Kadane: "[The lists were] a big help to the army. They probably killed a lot of people and I probably have a lot of blood on my hands, but that's not all bad. There's a time when you have to strike hard at a decisive moment." That blood, which apparently has stained his hands but not his conscience, once flowed through the people who Martens now describes as a who's who of the leadership of the then 3-million-member PKI, including PKI committee members at the provincial, city and village level and the leaders of the party's labor, women's and youth organizations. Kadane reports that U.S. Embassy officials turned over about 5,000 names to Suharto and his military friends. According to Joseph Lazarsky, deputy CIA station chief in Jakarta in 1965, embassy officials checked off from their lists the names of PKI leaders subsequently captured and killed—lists that they had spent two years preparing.

**Part of the plan:** Noam Chomsky, the linguist and political philosopher, has spent the last 30 years following the bloody trail of U.S. suppression of popular revolt. Commenting on the revelations in Kadane's expose, he told *In These Times*: "It's been well known for years that the U.S. took a favorable view of the massacre. At the time the commentary in the press was very favorable. And the general reaction has remained upbeat. Suharto is now called a moderate in the press, when in fact he is one of the biggest killers in the 20th century. What is novel about these revelations is two things: first, the open admission that U.S. officials consciously and willingly took part in the massacre, and second and even more striking, the idea that mass slaughter is legitimate as long as the people who are killed are Communists—that is, landless peasants who have an agrarian-reform policy that we don't like. It is like what happened in El Salvador but on a massive scale."



## Voters vs. bidders

Public Citizen has taken its "we the people show" onto the airwaves for the first time in the group's history. A 30-second TV commercial touting its nationwide drive to mobilize public opinion for full public funding of congressional elections can—with luck—now be seen on local stations and national cable channels. "Our founding fathers created a government of the people, by the people and for the people," the ad states. "But today's government is 'for sale' to the highest bidder." Citizens can register their support and order a campaign finance reform action kit for \$5 by calling 1-900-230-2300.

## Expensive air

Rep. Dan Rostenkowski, the Illinois Democrat who hates "meddlesome" ethics rules, picked up a whopping \$285,000 in 1989 honoraria fees—more than any congressional speechmaker in history. Rostenkowski, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, is allowed by law to keep only a measly \$26,850 and must donate the surplus to charity. His honoraria report, according to *Congressional Quarterly*, is typed in semilegible, old-English type-script that comes from a typewriter apparently used only for his financial disclosures. "I know of no other use for it," said James Jaffe, Rostenkowski's spokesman.

## Not even some land and a mule

No more Crest toothpaste and Camel cigarettes for Nicaragua's contras. Now that Uncle Sam no longer requires their insurgent services, many of the rebels are surrendering their weapons to President Violeta Chamorro. In return they receive a certificate and a clear plastic bag containing a blue-and-white-striped Oxford-style shirt, a pair of jeans, a pair of rubber boots and a few pounds of beans and rice. And they call it democracy.

## Troubled Times

A grand total of three blacks—all Republicans—have served in the U.S. Senate. But in a recent story the *New York Times* managed to misidentify each of them. Its June 8 article on primary elections around the country misstated the actual number of black senators: it omitted Blanche Kelso Bruce, a Reconstruction-era senator from Mississippi who served from 1875 to 1881; misidentified Hiram Rhodes Revels, who represented Mississippi in 1870-71; and misstated the length of service of Edward W. Brooke, who represented Massachusetts from 1967 to 1979.

## Dirtiest secret of the year, page 3

Now we can add the 1962 arrest of Nelson Mandela to the CIA's Greatest Hits. According to recent press reports, a retired U.S. official claims that within hours of the African National Congress leader's arrest, a CIA operative entered the official's office and said: "We have turned Mandela over to the South African security branch. We gave them every detail, what he would be wearing, the time of day, just where he would be. ... It is one of our greatest coups." The former official said he decided that Mandela's release rendered his 28-year-old secret invalid.

## Stats of emergency

The June 8 lifting of South Africa's four-year-old state of emergency brought with it an extensive casualty list, reports Ross Dunn from Johannesburg. More than 5,400 South Africans were killed between June 1986—when the official state of emergency was declared—and March 31 of this year. (More than 1,000 South Africans were killed this year alone.) According to the Johannesburg's Human Rights Commission, more than 50,000—almost half of whom were children, some as young as 10—have been detained since July 1985, when a partial state of emergency was imposed. Though their emergency powers and indemnity claims have been repealed, police still have access to the Internal Security Act, which enables them to ban gatherings and detain people for up to 180 days.

## Keenen Peck

Keenen Peck, who worked in *In These Times*' library while attending high school, died of a heart attack June 6 at the age of 29. From 1982 to 1985, he was associate editor of *The Progressive* and later attended law school at the University of Wisconsin. At the time of his death, he was legal counsel to the Senate Judiciary Committee. Sen. Herbert Kohl (D-WI) said Peck was the driving force behind President Bush's signing in late May of enabling legislation for a United Nations treaty outlawing biological weapons.

## Racism greets Peru's Fujimori

LIMA, PERU—When Alberto Fujimori cast his ballot in the election that made him president-elect of Peru, he was met at the polling place by an angry crowd of Peruvian teenagers wearing T-shirts from U.S. universities and middle-aged women holding German shepherd dogs. "Japanese back to Japan!" they shouted at the son of Japanese immigrants. "We want a president that is 100 percent Peruvian!" They pelted him with rocks.

This is the ruling class of Peru. They were distraught that their \$50 million in campaign contributions and a coalition of the traditional political parties plus the archbishop could be beaten by a political outsider who spoke for the poor. What they and novelist Mario Vargas Llosa had apparently forgotten was that in Peru the poor and the outsiders are a big majority.

The crowd was no tamer at campaign headquarters as the news was announced that Vargas Llosa had conceded. The novelist's supporters openly discussed not merely the possibility of a coup d'état but the kind of coup they most preferred. "A Pinochet-style coup is what we need, not Velasco-style," one said, referring to the Peruvian military dictatorship of the '60s as "too nationalistic. Under Pinochet, Chilean exports doubled, you know."

Peru averted a five-year term under Vargas Llosa, who proposed a "tough-handed" presidency and



who favored the Chilean economy in his campaign speeches. The Fujimori presidency, however, has already sparked a right-wing backlash and could—like half of all Peruvian presidencies—end in a military coup.

How long will it be until the military takes over for Fujimori? "I'll give him a year and a half, maybe two years," said Juan Leo Salazar, a Peruvian who spent two years working for the Republican National Committee composing President Bush's campaign messages for Spanish-speakers in the U.S. "If this guy doesn't do something for Peru, the Bush administration will crucify him."

The Catholic Church also spoke out for the Llosa candidacy, condemning the inclusion of "evangelists" on Fujimori's Change-90 slate. Lima Archbishop Augusto Vargas Al Zamora led a procession of the faithful carrying images of the Virgin Mary through the streets of Lima.

The idea was to keep the evangel-

ists from displacing the Catholic Church. "If that's the intent of the campaign, then Catholics must not vote for Change-90," said Monsignor Luis Armando Bambaren. Ironically, Vargas Llosa describes himself as an agnostic. Fujimori is a practicing Catholic.

Llosa also received help from the public-relations firm of Brown and Associates in New York and from the U.S. Embassy, which lent him videos of the Kennedy-Nixon and Bush-Dukakis debates.

Fujimori's campaign consistently made disadvantages into advantages. Since he was priced out of the major newspapers and television stations, Fujimori launched his campaign by waiting outside the smaller independent radio stations at 6 a.m. hoping for a chance to be interviewed. His association with the sound of the mountain music they played helped his image among the *campesinos*.

Fujimori's other unlikely advantage was being a *nikkei*, as descendants of Japanese immigrants in Peru call themselves. Peru's largely native Indian population related better to Fujimori's status as the member of a minority group and to his Oriental features than they could to Vargas Llosa's European face and ruling-class image.

The *nikkei*, however, kept their distance, fearing a right-wing backlash. The community of 500,000 did not support Fujimori because, as one restaurateur said, "If the Fujimori presidency doesn't work out, they'll take it out on us."

—Ken Dermota

## Stopping the contamination with zero discharge

GREEN BAY, WISC.—The yellow tour bus stopped near the mouth of the Fox River and a dozen people got out to look at the discharge from the metropolitan sewage-treatment plant. The plant treats wastewater from two large paper mills. From the river bank the people watched a black, syrupy liquid spread out from the underwater discharge pipe. A sign posted over the spot explained that the discoloration was caused by natural tannins and lignins from wood used in papermaking and reassured boaters that the discharge was perfectly safe.

"That's a lie," said several of the observers as they climbed back on the bus. The group was taking a "toxic tour" organized in conjunction with the recent annual meeting of Great Lakes United, a U.S./Canadian coalition of groups and individuals working to protect the Great Lakes. The environmentalists said that chlorine used in the paper-pulp bleaching process reacts with organic wood compounds to form toxic

organochlorines, including dioxins. The pulp and paper industry, they said, is the biggest direct dumper of toxic chemicals into the Great Lakes.

Area environmentalists believe the only long-term solution to the toxic problem is "zero discharge," the complete elimination of the production, use and disposal of persistent toxic chemicals. Most current government regulations focus on end-of-pipe pollution controls—like scrubbers on smokestacks or dilution zones for discharges into waterways. But these only slow down the contamination. And they often sidetrack cleanups by encouraging fruitless arguments about how many parts per million of a particular substance is "safe."

Organizers at the Great Lakes United meeting created a Zero Discharge Alliance to campaign for an end to all toxic discharges throughout the basin. While the environmental movement as a whole has begun pushing harder for pollution prevention, the effort is becoming especially strong in the Great Lakes region—where alarming health effects have been observed in wildlife and where the principle of zero discharge has been codified most explicitly in such international agree-

ments as the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

The first goal of the zero discharge campaign is a ban on chlorine use in the pulp and paper industry. Organizers want the industry to change manufacturing processes so that chlorine compounds are not used for bleaching. Paper mills in Sweden, for example, have already adopted alternatives such as oxygen bleaching.

The campaign also questions the need for bleaching paper "whiter than white." Although off-white paper is perfectly adequate for most uses, consumers have been led to believe that white is better. They also aren't aware that their paper products may contain trace amounts of dioxin. Organizers believe that once consumers are informed about the potential risks to their health and to the health of the environment, they will start demanding unbleached products, as do consumers in Europe.

"It's time now to go beyond remediation to stopping pollution at the source," said Jack Weinberg of Greenpeace. "We can get rid of classes of chemicals like chlorine. We don't need them."

—David Beach



By David Moberg

**W**HEN 9,400 GREYHOUND BUS WORKERS walked off the job in early March, it looked like another case of a union heading for the slaughter. Taking advantage of a normally slack time for bus travel, Greyhound Lines Chief Executive Fred G. Currey was ready and waiting to break the strike that he had provoked through intransigent bargaining. After hiring as many strikebreakers as he could, then charging the union with racketeering in conjunction with reported violence, Currey on May 8 announced that the strike was "over, or at least it's irrelevant."

Yet Greyhound is now on the financial ropes at the start of its most lucrative season, and the company took refuge from creditors by declaring bankruptcy in early June. Strikers—who have held remarkably solid for several months—have offered to buy the nation's only remaining interstate bus company. Creditors for Currey's debt-burdened company are apparently not willing to stick by him as did Eastern Airlines creditors—much to their financial loss—when Chairman Frank Lorenzo similarly sought to fight a strike by seeking protection in bankruptcy court. If the National Labor Relations Board's recent complaint that Currey failed to bargain in good faith is upheld, strikers will be able to regain their jobs and back pay. The potential tab is now mounting at the rate of \$13.6 million a month.

**Crucial errors:** After his overpriced, highly leveraged, \$340-million purchase of Greyhound Lines in 1987, Currey won wage concessions from drivers. As part of his revival of the company, he tried to establish a friendly rapport with workers, meeting frequently with drivers. Union officials now see that workplace diplomacy as a strategy to woo workers away from the union in this year's crucial showdown.

Currey's plan backfired and workers failed to cross picket lines en masse, primarily because they felt Currey had betrayed his promises to them. They had expected modest wage increases to regain what they had given up, but Currey's proposals would have cut most drivers' pay. More fundamentally, they felt their jobs were endangered by Currey's insistence on an unrestricted power to subcontract work and on undermining workers' rights on the job.

Currey made two other crucial errors, according to James Cushing-Murray, president of the big Los Angeles-based Local 1222 of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU). First, he failed to win over the 1,000 former Trailways drivers. They were upset with the Greyhound union leadership for denying them their full seniority when Currey absorbed their company. If Currey had not agreed to shortchange their seniority rights just before the strike, Cushing-Murray argues, Trailways drivers might have been angry enough to cross the picket lines. Instead, they have been solid strike supporters and the union recently reversed itself, giving them the seniority they had demanded.

Currey also erred in publicizing incidents of violence. "You don't want to go on national TV telling people that it's dangerous to ride a bus," Cushing-Murray said, noting that Greyhound had carefully covered up all violent incidents in previous strikes. Currey,

however, apparently hoped that accusations of violence would discredit the strike, but he may have unwittingly driven away many riders as well.

Greyhound claims there have been 52 shootings and 100 strike-related bombings.

## LABOR

So far no union members have been convicted, and in at least one case in California, two men with no ties to the union confessed to a bombing, saying they knew the union would be blamed. "There's no doubt in my mind that this incident confirms what we've suspected all along, that these [violent] acts were carried out by Greyhound," charged

**CEO Fred Currey claims it was \$50 million in expenses for lawyers and security forces that pushed Greyhound over the edge.**

Harold Mendlowitz, president of New York Local 1202. Several strikers have been injured and one killed when buses driven by "scab" drivers crashed through picket lines.

Greyhound sued the union for \$30 million on April 9 under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) for allegedly using criminal means to "cripple Greyhound financially in order to obtain what they cannot achieve through legal strike and labor activities." Increasingly, employers—such as Eastern's Lorenzo—have tried to use RICO suits against unions, which have occasionally countersued, but the

legitimacy of such uses of the law has not yet been solidly established.

**Miles apart:** Throughout the strike Currey and the union have been miles apart in estimating the company's success in keeping the buses running. Greyhound claims that nearly 600 ATU members have crossed the picket lines and that it now has replaced 3,900 of the 6,300 drivers. The company claims bus traffic is nearly three-fourths of last year's level. But union sources estimate that no more than 2,700 drivers are now at work, including roughly 500 crossover workers, and that the company has no more than half its past passenger load.

In the first quarter, when the strike had barely begun, Greyhound lost \$56 million, while taking in \$173 million. Since then, the bus line has laid off mechanics and managerial staff and failed to make payments on its debt and leases of buses. (Greyhound Lines actually owns few buses.) The company tried, but failed, to repurchase cheaply much of its devalued debt to relieve credit pressures. It may finally have rushed to bankruptcy to prevent Greyhound Dial, the bus line's former owner, from reclaiming its leased buses and terminals.

Currey claimed that it was not the strike but \$50 million in expenses for lawyers and security forces that pushed the company over the edge. Cushing-Murray pointedly noted that the union had been willing to settle its wage dispute for only \$60 million over three years.

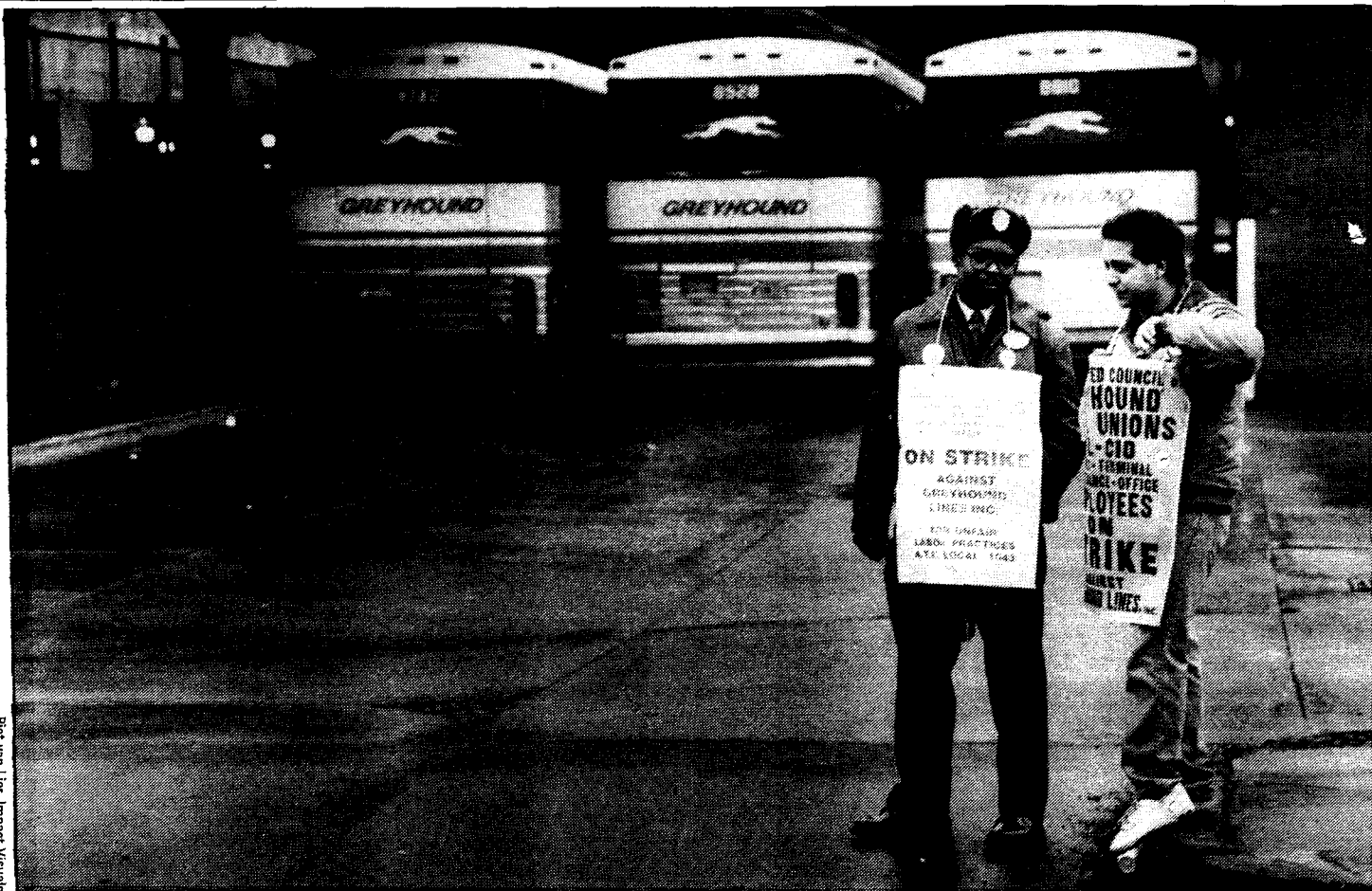
The bankruptcy court—the filing was strategically made in Brownsville, Texas, to make it difficult for creditors to appear in court—gave Currey until June 28 to present a new operating plan. But creditors are reportedly insisting that Currey resolve the labor dispute. Meanwhile, despite Greyhound's rejection of its initial overtures, the

union is pursuing its bid for employee ownership and talking with creditors.

"We don't know how much [the company is] worth, but we have the money to buy it," Local 1303 Vice President William Pearsall said. "And we have a management team [of former Greyhound executives] ready to go." In theory, the union could take over the company cheaply. "There is no value to the company at this point in equity terms," argues ATU chief counsel Earle Putnam, and the debt has been trading at roughly 40 cents on the dollar. The union has a strong bargaining chip, since its back-pay claims, if upheld, would have first priority over any other claims. As the company's major creditor, the union is seeking to be named to the bankruptcy court's creditor committee.

Ultimately, "the only answer seemingly lies in dealings which would displace the current management and lead to an [employee stock ownership plan] or some other change in ownership through bankruptcy proceedings," Putnam said. Cushing-Murray, who has long advocated an employee buyout, believes that "the union will be successful in purchasing the company because we're the only ones who can make an offer to save the company and stop liquidation. This is a service industry and requires a lot of cooperation, especially of the drivers." But Mendlowitz, a buyout skeptic, worries that workers might pay too much for the bankrupt firm and end up suffering financially.

Despite its own bumbling, secretive and uninspired direction of the strike, the ATU leadership has lucked out through the solidarity of its members and Currey's own much greater strategic mistakes. Now, as so many other unions have found, it has been forced into the game of influencing who owns and manages the company in order simply to negotiate a labor contract. □



Members of the Amalgamated Transit Union: forced to play the ownership game.

## Greyhound strikers bid for the wheel





## Executive branch as guilty as Poindexter

By John Canham-Clyne

WASHINGTON

**I**N HIS REMARKS DURING THE JUNE SENTENCING of former National Security Adviser John Poindexter, U.S. District Judge Harold Greene described the admiral as the "decisionmaking head" of a conspiracy to obstruct Congress. Greene seems to believe that Poindexter ran a rogue operation, insisting that the conspiracy "was not an effort by the executive branch of the government but an effort by a number of people who were working in the executive branch."

Nothing could be further from the truth: the Iran-contra affair was national security business as usual. The Reagan administration as a whole ran the Iran arms sales and the contra resupply effort. And even on the narrow coverup questions covered in Poindexter's trial, the National Security Council (NSC) had the support of the national security bureaucracy, from constitutionally appointed department heads on down. A survey of the primary executive-branch institutions devoted to the making of foreign policy reveals systematic participation in the sale of arms to Iran, the illegal resupply of the contras and the coverup of those actions.

**Central Intelligence Agency:** From top to bottom, the CIA participated in both operations and in the attempt to hide them from

Congress. Oliver North worked with Norman Gardner, then special assistant to the deputy director for operations, while cooking up phony chronologies of the Iranian arms ship-

### IRAN-CONTRA

ments after the story broke in November 1986. On Nov. 20, 1986, Poindexter, North, CIA Director William Casey and Deputy Director Robert Gates met in Poindexter's office to coordinate briefings by Poindexter and testimony by Casey to be given to both congressional intelligence committees the next day.

**U.S. District Judge Harold Green seems to believe that Poindexter ran a rogue operation. Nothing could be further from the truth.**

Casey and Poindexter both lied to the committees about the degree of U.S. participation in the November 1985 shipment of HAWK anti-aircraft missiles to Iran.

The CIA participated as an institution in both the arms sales to Iran and the contra resupply program, providing intelligence, logistical support, liaison with the contras and a network of "retired" officers. Joe Fernandez, CIA station chief in Costa Rica, escaped prosecution for his role when Attorney General Richard Thornburgh prohibited the release of widely publicized intelligence information (see *In These Times*, February 21). Deputy Director of Operations Clair George and Central American Task Force Chief Alan Fiers met constantly with North about the resupply operation throughout 1985 and 1986.

**State Department:** Despite Secretary of State George Shultz' much-ballyhooed opposition to arms for hostages, he and his highest-ranking subordinates were intimately involved in the contra resupply operation—particularly the quid-pro-quo arrangements with Honduras, Guatemala and Costa Rica, wherein those nations received increased or expedited aid in return for contra support. Langhorne "Tony" Motley, Elliott Abrams' predecessor as assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, attended

the Crisis Pre-Planning Group (CPPG) meetings at which the details of the quid pro quo with Honduras were worked out. The CPPG included representatives from the NSC staff, State and Defense departments and the CIA. Motley sent Shultz a Feb. 7, 1985, memo outlining the plan, which the secretary approved. John Negroponte, then ambassador to Honduras, carried the offer and the text of a letter from President Ronald Reagan to President Roberto Suazo Cordova. On April 28, 1987, Abrams assured the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee that "the U.S. has never threatened or in any way linked support to the Nicaraguan resistance forces to our foreign-aid levels." A staffer on the committee asserted that the documents released at the North trial proved "to the committee's satisfaction that State [Department] lied to the committee about 'quid pro quo' with economic aid to Honduras in '86."

Poindexter was convicted of obstructing Congress by approving North's lies to the House Intelligence Committee. Surely Shultz bears similar responsibility for the lies of his subordinates, particularly since Shultz refused to fire Abrams after the 1987 Iran-contra hearings.

Abrams, of course, was fully apprised of the illegal contra resupply network. North's notebook entry for April 25, 1986, obtained from the National Security Archive, shows the agenda for "Mtg. w/ Elliott." The entries include "support for S[outhern] Front," "Air base open in C[osta] R[ica]" and "100 B.P.'s from Chile." The last entry refers to the administration's efforts to persuade Chile to send the contras Blowpipe anti-aircraft missiles.

**The Pentagon:** Defense Department fingerprints were all over the Iran-contra operations. In the quid-pro-quo case, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs Richard Armitage and Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Fred Ikle sat on the CPPG and briefed Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger on all the details. To keep the U.S. end of the bargain, on February 27, 1987, then-National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane sent a memo to Weinberger and Joint Chiefs Chairman John Vessey (and Shultz, Casey, et al.), instructing them to speed the release of military assistance, economic aid and intelligence to Honduras. After Reagan authorized the quid pro quo, a followup memo from North to McFarlane states, "Defense has prepared a list of those security assistance items for which delivery can be expedited."

The Defense Department assisted North throughout the operation. The military advisory group in El Salvador facilitated illegal resupply flights to the contras during the time when such activity was prohibited by the Boland Amendment, with Col. James Steele, commander of the advisory battalion acting as liaison between the "Enterprise" and the Salvadoran air force at Ilopango air base in El Salvador.

**The president:** In a May 29, 1990, opinion dismissing Poindexter's request for a retrial, Greene went out of his way to exonerate Reagan, saying that "there is no evidence in this record to support the proposition that former President Ronald Reagan ordered or authorized the conspiracy, the obstruction, the false statements or the violations of the Boland Amendments themselves." Not only does this astonishing conclusion fly in the face of the evidence, it also ignores the fact that the trial and Reagan's testimony weren't designed to produce a detailed inquiry into



Reagan's role. The jury in the North case acquitted him on nine of 12 charges because they believed his superiors had authorized much of his activity. To avoid a similar result, prosecutor Dan Webb abetted Reagan's dissembling and perpetuated Poindexter's fall-guy role. In order to secure a conviction, Webb had to paint Poindexter as the leader of the conspiracy.

In his videotaped testimony, described by Greene only half-accurately as "credibl[e] and under oath," Reagan admitted to soliciting increased funding for the contras personally from King Fahd of Saudi Arabia. As Murray Waas reported in the March 20, 1990 *Village Voice*, still-classified documents indicate that Reagan also sought permission from British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher for the Chilean military to ship the Blowpipes. The transaction required Thatcher's consent under British law, because the Chileans had obtained the missiles from Britain.

As for the quid pro quo, on Feb. 19, 1985, after a week of interagency deliberations, McFarlane sent Reagan a memo recommending speeding up aid to the Honduran government for further support for the contras. That memo, introduced into evidence in the North trial and available from the National Security Archive, bears the initials RR.

The president, all the crucial Cabinet-level officials, a posse of assistant secretaries, deputy directors, generals and colonels: how many "individuals" does it take for the executive branch as a whole to undertake an operation? Greene summed up his baffling view of Poindexter as a Cold Warrior who went a little too far by chanting the national security mantra and warning of a future that looks very much like the present:

"In this still-dangerous world, the United States could not be effective, perhaps it could not survive, if information on intelligence methods and sources could not be kept secret. But ... if members of the security apparatus could, with impunity, keep from those elected by the people that which they're entitled to know—or worse, feed them false information—those who control the classified data would be the real decisionmakers."

Sadly, the circumstances Greene warns against are already the reality of U.S. government. Perhaps the most bizarre aspect of Greene's view of the affair is the sentence itself. Poindexter received a whole six months in jail for supposedly subverting the Constitution on his own initiative.

Ironically, the independent counsel is now pursuing a course that assumes either that the operation was part of normal bureaucratic processes or that Poindexter presided over a truly enormous conspiracy. According to a report in the *Washington Post*, a new grand jury investigation is focusing on a broad range of institutions and individuals, especially interagency groups such as the CPPG. However, absent a heroic effort, the grand jury is unlikely to indict Reagan, Bush or any Cabinet officer. Indeed, the *Post* story identifies Abrams and Donald Gregg, now ambassador to South Korea and Bush's vice national security adviser, as likely targets for prosecution, leaving intact the misperception that the Iran-contra affair was an aberration and that the Constitution still functions. □

John Canham-Clyne is a freelance writer based in Washington, D.C. Some of the documents for this article were made available by the National Security Archive.

# Illuminating notations from scandal's chief operative

By Malcolm Byrne

WASHINGTON

**A**LTHOUGH THE IRAN-CONTRA AFFAIR OFFICIALLY ended more than three and a half years ago, new information continues to surface about the scandal. Last month, two years' worth of Oliver North's diaries were released to the public, offering fresh indications that the affair involved more extensive, government-approved operations than officials have previously acknowledged.

Most of the more than 2,600 pages released contain new details and clues about secret U.S. policies and activities around the globe, as seen through the scandal's chief operative.

The notebooks became available as the result of litigation arising out of two Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests filed in July 1989. The requests were submitted by

the National Security Archive, a non-profit research institute and library of declassified documents, and by Public Citizen, a public-interest group founded by Ralph Nader. The government denied both requests, leading the groups to file a joint lawsuit on Aug. 16, 1989. Last April, after months of dodging Justice Department roadblocks, the petitioners

## NORTH NOTEBOOKS

won their fight when a federal district judge forced the department to cough up the documents.

The result was a two-foot-high stack of photocopied pages from 22 reporter and stenographer notebooks dating from January 1984 through November 1986. About 80 percent was completely unexcised, a phenomenon rarely experienced in contemporary national security research.

**A man of the world:** Much of the information is extraordinary. North was an inveterate note-taker. He took his notebooks wherever he went, often recording the most minor details of his meetings, phone calls and discussions with everyone from heads of state to arms dealers. Some entries are clearly personal. (He has a note that says "Mom" followed by a phone number, entered on the day he was fired.)

The notebooks' span is truly global, from Suriname to Tripoli, from Tehran to Pretoria, on subjects ranging from shipments of tor-

pedoes to Taiwan to deliveries of plutonium to Japan.

Two prominent figures who appear regularly in these pages are then-Vice President George Bush and Panama's former de facto leader Manuel Noriega.

On Nov. 25, 1986, the day the Iran-contra scandal hit the headlines, North registered a call from his boss, then-National Security Adviser John Poindexter, followed by several lines beginning: "VP call Peres," referring to then-Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres. The notes continue, "Discovered contra connection; wd [would] be best if Israel wd accept that they were aware that some funds were diverted."

Though it's unclear whether Bush actually made the call, the fact that either North or Poindexter would think of him as the appropriate person to cajole Israel into going along with the cover story suggests he was far closer to the issue than he has claimed.

Noriega appears primarily in a series of entries from the weeks leading up to the exposure of the contra program. The notations detail broad U.S. government dealings with the Panamanian general even after a June 12, 1986, *New York Times* exposé concerning Noriega's drug dealing and money laundering. On Aug. 24, 1986, for example, North met with Duane "Dewey" Clarridge, then head of European operations for the CIA.

"Send word back to Noriega to meet in Europe or Israel; Tell [Assistant Secretary of State Elliott] Abrams that Noriega has asked for mtg [meeting] w/ Goode [North alias] re cleaning up image."

Ten days later, North recorded a meeting

Continued on page 11

## A matter of politics

It bears remembering that until last year, Oliver North alone retained custody of these documents, despite the contention of White House officials that they contained information so sensitive that it was classified above "Top Secret."

According to Sen. John Kerry (D-MA), administration reluctance to pursue the issue was due largely to politics. Kerry has charged, for example, that certain Noriega entries were "suppressed by the White House" as part of an effort to conceal "politically damaging information" about official knowledge of Noriega's activities.

But while Congress was in some instances the victim of administration stonewalling, in other instances Congress victimized itself. Because of severe, self-imposed time restraints on their inquiry, the Iran-contra committees granted North an extraordinary compromise in order to get speedy access to his diaries. Panel members allowed North and his attorneys to delete portions they deemed irrelevant to the investigation. Committee staff spot-checked certain North excisions and pronounced themselves satisfied with North's decisions.

But as noted in a report issued by Kerry's Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Terrorism, Narcotics and International Operations, Iran-contra investigators were simply "not in a position to determine the relevance of the material deleted." Even a partial comparison of pages released to the subcommittee with uncensored pages from the National Security Archive/Public Citizen Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests shows blatant examples of excised material that bore directly on matters that were then under scrutiny.

Ironically, the unusual success in obtaining these diaries underscores the serious problem of guaranteeing public access to government information. The notebooks' release has come about only as a result of extraordinary congressional and legal pressure on the government.

—M.B.

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By Paul Hockenros

BUDAPEST

**G**ARGANTUAN STATUES OF JOSEPH STALIN and Albania's own orthodox Communist mastermind, the late President Enver Hoxha, still keep watch over the capital city of Tirana. Yet, on the shores of the Adriatic, a stepped-up reform process is eroding the foundations that have kept Albania the last fortress of Stalinism in Europe. Though long overdue, the tiny country's gradual re-entry into the real world adds a new, possibly destabilizing dimension to the larger question of a peaceful European house.

The fate of Albania's uncharted reform is closely intertwined with the many Balkan peoples' uneasy coexistence. The self-proclaimed end of its self-isolation finally opens the way for inter-Balkan rapprochement and cooperation. At the same time, the country borders Yugoslavia's ethnically torn Kosovo province, where nearly 2 million ethnic Albanians are challenging the Serb republic's oppressive rule. Albania's liberalization could aggravate the province's explosive nationalist tensions and hasten the Yugoslav federation's imminent disintegration.

Albania's reform course is fragile enough in its own right. Concessions in May from the party hierarchy have set Tirana on a trajectory that none of its Communist counterparts was able to maintain without social upheaval and collapse. But Albania's situation is unique. Its long history of subordination to foreign powers, semifederal culture and massive security apparatus might prevent domestic reform from spinning out of control. The leadership, however, must walk a fine line between party hardliners within its ranks and a growing nationwide force of disenchanted youth.

Under president and party head Ramiz Alia, Tirana is embarking on the second phase of reform that was first initiated after Hoxha's death in 1985. The cautious approach to change adopted by Alia, Hoxha's self-groomed heir, stems more from a sense of pragmatism than from a sincere commitment to democracy. Albeit less frequently, Hoxha and Stalin are still extolled as the geniuses of Marxism-Leninism and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov is regularly castigated for completing the "political terrorism against communism" that his "spiritual father" Nikita Khrushchev began. After four decades of suffocating tyranny, the leadership justifies the new track as a "natural development of the policies of Enver Hoxha."

**Survival tactics:** But unlike the paranoid Hoxha, intent on "ideological purity" and isolation at all costs, Alia recognizes that participation in international life is essential if its architect's creation is to survive in any form. Tirana appears willing to polish its international image in order to avert starvation and unrest at home. The defensive tone of Alia's recent speeches and the spate of initiatives since the Romanian revolution show a leadership running scared. Almost overnight in January, shops were better stocked and the tempo of Albania's half-hearted *perestroika* accelerated.

Tiranaologists see the political thaw as a goodwill gesture toward the swelling numbers of well-informed young people who saw the events in Eastern Europe unfold on Greek, Yugoslav and Italian TV channels. International passports have been granted,

## Stalinism's last fortress under seige in Albania

penal codes and censorship laws modified and a new ministry of justice established.

For the first time since 1967, when Albania declared itself "the world's only atheist state," religious practices are tolerated. The celebration of non-secular holidays formerly carried stiff prison sentences. Churches and mosques may now open to a population that

### ALBANIA

was two-thirds Moslem before the war. The faith is certain to revive itself, perhaps strengthening cultural links between Albanians and the overwhelmingly Moslem ethnic Albanians in Yugoslavia.

Progress on human rights is also underway. In a critical step forward, Albania finally ended its boycott of the Helsinki process this year. Amnesty International has heaped criticism upon the dictatorship's treatment of political prisoners and the Greek minority. Experts estimate that between 20,000 and 30,000 political prisoners are held in the country's five notorious prison camps.

The party has made overtures in the political realm too, announcing a clampdown on cronyism and a limited five-year tenure for

**Albania's reform is fragile enough in its own right. Concessions in May from the party hierarchy have set Tirana on a trajectory that none of its Communist counterparts was able to maintain without social upheaval and collapse.**

ranking officials. Party newspapers have opened a forum for restrained debate. The reform from above, however, leaves the classic one-party security state intact. No movement toward genuine political pluralism can be detected from the aged cadre. Reports from Albania say that increased police surveillance has accompanied the experiment. Albania's own equivalent of the Romanian Securitate, the 30,000-strong Sigurimi paramilitary police, continues to keep a careful eye on the country's 3 million inhabitants.

At the root of Alia's realpolitik is a decrepit economy unable to keep pace with the country's demographic explosion. The birth rate—five times the European average—adds 50,000 to 60,000 new workers a year to the workforce. A two-year drought has exacerbated the plight of a people with the lowest living standard on the Continent. The economy's rigid centralization, combined with its truncated access to foreign markets

and technology, have caused exports to plummet. Industrial output is stagnating because of obsolete equipment and shortages of replacement parts for its Soviet and Chinese factories.

**The new path:** A push toward decentralization and the introduction of limited market mechanisms mark a turning point in economic policy after five years of wary tinkering. The government's prescription includes fluctuating prices for different consumer goods, smaller and independent enterprises and greater variance in personal income. In agriculture, larger private plots may serve as "auxiliary farms" to boost supplies of meat, milk and vegetables.

Measures facilitating integration into the international economy have also been introduced. The country desperately needs foreign markets, credit and technology in order to put its considerable raw materials and energy reserves to work. As COMECON, the trade and development association of Communist countries, sings its swan song, economists recognize that the lek will become worthless once the country's major trading partners convert to hard-currency exchange. Albania's participation in the Balkan conference of foreign ministers last year paved the way for new regional trade agreements. The cooperation could help offset the consequences of the outsider's exclusion from the European Community trade bloc and smooth over long-simmering border disputes.

The success of Alia's initiatives hinges upon his ability to simultaneously appease a restless young population and the party's hard-core Stalinists. Reports of demonstrations in several cities this year confirm suspicions that Albanians aren't reacting to the turmoil in Eastern Europe as indignantly as their rulers. The party itself appears split between hardliners, led by Hoxha's widow, and pragmatists like Alia. Since no purge at the top has accompanied changes, it can be assumed that the reverential old guard remains firmly in place.

As the under-26 generation—one-third of the population—becomes more assertive, it is expressing its preference for jeans, rock'n'roll and trendy haircuts over soporific party hymns and patriotic discipline. Unlike their Kosovo peers, who for decades have spearheaded militant protest movements against the Yugoslav regime, Albanian students have no tradition of political opposition. Yet demonstrations by several hundred students broke out in at least three cities early this year. The authorities cracked down hard and upped police presence at the universities.

The nation's youth could well be the reformer's best ally in the short run. For Alia to graft an alliance between the two, he must delicately phase out the Stalin-Hoxha cult without sparking a coup. If the leader were to position himself as the well-intentioned reformer, like Romania's President Ion Iliescu, he might be able to distance himself enough from the former dictator to bring the youth in tow.

Meanwhile, the feared Sigurimi have his-

tory on their side in keeping a lid on dissent. The country has virtually no democratic or bourgeois traditions in its 500-year servitude under foreign despotism. As a result of its choice to share its Turkish rulers' fate almost until the end of the Ottoman Empire, Albanian sociopolitical culture is backward and rural, informed by centuries of tribalism.

Aspects of the Hoxha legacy are still sacred to many Albanians. The population feels indebted to him for securing its long-thwarted dream of national sovereignty. In its short history as a modern nation-state since 1912, Albania has been under the tutelage of, successively, Austria-Hungary, Yugoslavia, Italy, Germany, Yugoslavia again, the Soviet Union and China. The national pride of independence is a potent emotion that Alia consistently draws upon to shore up support.

**The Kosovo question:** The country might avoid popular upheaval only to find itself smack in the middle of Eastern Europe's hottest ethnic conflict. Once heralded as the vehicle for Yugoslav-Albanian reconciliation, Serbia's southern province of Kosovo is now the most formidable obstacle to that process. Ever more oppressed by their Serb overlords, the Albanian Kosovars—90 percent of the population there—may judge reform next door as their chance to bolt from the republic and merge into a Greater Albania. Military might rather than diplomatic cooperation would then determine the Balkans' new order.

Serbia's belligerent party boss, Slobodan Milosevic, has further tightened the screws in Kosovo since anti-government riots in January left 30 ethnic Albanians dead. Belgrade has made it plain that it will stop at nothing to integrate the once fully autonomous province into the republic before the promised elections by year's end. A free vote would certainly result in the victory of the now-illegal Albanian opposition parties.

The military occupation of the province and newly disclosed plans to strip Kosovo of its last vestige of autonomy will only radicalize the Kosovars. Beneath the ethnic Albanians' democratic demands lies a strong nationalist sentiment, which liberalization across the border should intensify. While Tirana has denounced the brutal oppression of the Kosovars, it has kept itself at arm's length from calls for a Greater Albania. But nothing prevents reform there from leading to the surge in nationalism witnessed throughout the rest of Eastern Europe. Albania's youth might rally to the aid of their Yugoslav brothers were events to lead to a full-scale insurrection or civil war. In the Yugoslav federation itself, heightened conflict in the south would only speed its own demise, fragmenting the republics even further along nationalistic lines.

The centrifugal forces at work in Central and Eastern Europe are operating on its fringes—in the Baltics, in Soviet Moldavia, in Germany and in Kosovo. Once the nationalist dynamic is set in motion, its reverberations could well penetrate into the center of Europe, unleashing ultranationalist and irredentist movements in the Czech lands, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland, as has already occurred in Romania. And as the Continent's first new borders since World War II are redrawn in Germany, Albania's emergence from the Communist Dark Ages adds another variable to the region's volatile chemistry. □



Continued from page 9

of the Restricted Interagency Group on Central America, of which he and Abrams were members. The subject was Panama. North's notes make clear what some of those "image" problems were: "Corruption; Drugs/Arms trafficking; Money Laundering; front Companies."

Less than three weeks later, on September 22, North met with Noriega in London. According to North's notes, the conversation focused on Noriega's ideas for setting up a "school" with "courses for commandos" offering training in "booby traps; night ops [operations]; Raids; Weapons trng [training]." The prospective students would be from "Afghanistan" and "DRF," referring to the Democratic Resistance Forces, or contras. There is the notation "Rabin approves," referring to Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who at that time was offering North other aid for the contras in the form of arms captured from the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The discussion then turned to an offer by Noriega to "Collect intel[ligence] on—Airport, Refinery, Puerto Sandino, Electric system, telephone system" in Nicaragua. According to documents released during North's trial, Noriega proposed sabotaging these facilities. Earlier he had even suggested assassinating the Sandinista leadership. Poindexter reportedly declined that offer but told North to follow up on the sabotage plan.

Although news of the contra resupply program hit the headlines in early October before

diana, then chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, knew that the main Salvadoran air base at Ilopango was being used for contra operations.

The other entry is dated March 4, 1985. It reflects a meeting between then-National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane and four Republican members of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Arizona's Bob Stump, Louisiana's Robert Livingston, Illinois' Henry Hyde and Florida's Bill McCollum.

An earlier White House memo released during the North trial indicates that, "in anticipation of marking up the Intelligence Authorization Bill [which includes restrictions on aid to Nicaraguan contras]," the four wanted to meet with "an appropriate administration policy official." The memo advised, "They are seeking guidance on this issue and the best strategy to pursue."

According to North's notes, McFarlane informed the group: "Plan includes: \$25-50M;

3d country support; CIA Intel[ligence]; Center the activity in W.H. [White House]." Meanwhile, North writes, Hyde mentions "Private Efforts" and "3d countries—Taiwan, Saudi Arabia."

As it happened, McFarlane's "plan" was in full swing at the time. North's contra program, centered in the White House, eventually obtained millions of dollars solicited from third countries, including, oddly enough, Saudi Arabia and later Taiwan. After the session, North drafted a memo for McFarlane to send on to the White House in which he played down Hyde's suggestion. "I explained why [private-sector and third-country assistance] are just not tenable alternatives—for the freedom fighters or for us."

The memo suggests that the congressmen were blissfully unaware of the covert contra program. Perhaps so. But among other things, the eager participation of Hyde and McCollum raises questions about their later

appointment to the joint select committee charged with investigating the Iran-contra affair.

The North notebooks are truly a gold mine of leads for investigators and researchers into the Reagan era. Dozens of entries not only detail the better-known Iran- and contra-related policies but also allude to less-understood activities such as negotiations with Syria over American hostages and other altogether unexplained operations across the globe.

The availability of this new information opens the way for a better public understanding of the Iran-contra affair even as it drives home the point that we will never know the full range of activities undertaken abroad by our elected and appointed officials.

Malcolm Byrne is an analyst at the National Security Archive in Washington, D.C. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of the Archive.

## “Taking On General Motors

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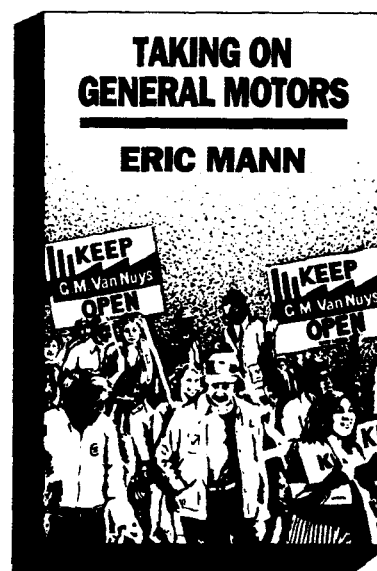
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By Anthony Borden

LONDON

**S**OCIALISM MAY LONG HAVE BECOME little more than a slogan for the British Labour Party. But after a sweeping policy review inspired by the party's 1987 defeat, its willingness to relinquish that ideal signals a major realignment in British politics: an opening gap between Labour and its namesake, the trade unions.

"Looking to the Future," the new policy program released at the end of May, was designed to broaden the party's electoral base by shifting Labour from its historic focus on publicly controlling the economy to fine-tuning it on behalf of industry. In policies consistent with that goal, as well as in presentation and party structure, Labour has begun to unravel the close union ties that have made it unique among European social-democratic parties.

But there is more to this separation than electoral calculation. For in attempting to reach beyond his core constituency, party leader Neil Kinnock has accepted the view that unions are a special interest group. The underlying ideology is that working people, through their organizations, should *not* play a role in running the economy. It is in this fundamental way that Labour, loosened from its moorings and tacking sharply for success at the polls, has sailed hard by Thatcherism.

**The blushing rose:** The policy review was intended to send out the message that Labour has changed, says Mary Walker, a party researcher who drafted much of the industrial-relations section. "And what it's all about is [Kinnock] saying [to the unions], 'I'm in control.'" Walker should know—last fall she and her boss, Member of Parliament (MP) Michael Meacher, were bumped from the review portfolio for being too pro-union.

Nowhere is Labour's responsibility more defined: the unions founded the party in 1906, financially support it—providing up to 80 percent of its total funds—and in substantial measure control the party's decision-making (nearly one-half the executive committee is made up of union members). And nowhere has Thatcher's agenda been more clear, passing four major union-busting bills while notoriously battering the miners in 1984-85, as well as printers, seafarers, dockworkers and others. So one would expect a hard-driving Kinnock to promise a repeal of all the hated Tory measures, as the unions have long demanded. Here, at least, Labour would wipe the slate clean of Thatcherism.

But while the crudest of the '80s anti-labor policies would be rescinded, the foundation of Tory trade-union law would remain, notably provisions making union funds vulner-

# Unraveling union ties, Labour goes for the vote

able to the courts, restricting secondary actions, requiring pre-strike ballots and banning closed shops.

The sensitivity of the debate over control is not difficult to fathom, for the party and the unions are both desperate for a Labour victory. The party has rebounded from its risk of marginalization in the mid-'80s. (In fact, so convincing were the centrist credentials of the policy review that one week after its release, the ailing Social Democratic Party (SDP)—formed after a famous split in 1981 by four influential and disgruntled Labour MPs—closed itself down.) But after so long

## BRITAIN

out of power, Labour still must prove itself to be a governing party.

A decade of high unemployment, deindustrialization and relentless government attacks have drained the unions of one-fifth of their membership, wiping out the gains they made in the '70s. Only 35 percent of the country's total workforce is now unionized, compared with a peak of 50 percent 10 years ago. On June 8, the 1.3 million-strong Transport and General Workers Union—the country's largest—revealed a deficit of \$15 million and reduced its party affiliation fees by \$450,000.

But Britain is hardly as anti-union as the relentless propaganda suggests. After a decade of union retrenchment, British industry is as structurally unsound as ever, and as a result, note Bob Jessop, Kevin Bonnett and Simon Bromley in the January/February *New Left Review*, public perception now places the blame squarely at the feet of management. Indeed, a number of recent innovative and successful actions, such as strikes by rail and ambulance workers, gained broad popular support and suggest a union revival.

**Who rules Britain?** The problem is that Labour has not attempted to recast the political debate over unions, leaving in place the terms set by Thatcher. The bogeyman of unbridled unionism still lingers from the grueling Winter of Discontent strikes of 1979, which brought down the previous Labour government. So too lingers the question posed by Tory Prime Minister Edward Heath before his pitiful 1974 election defeat in the midst of a miners' strike: "Who rules Britain?"

In a country with no written constitution, laws are widely understood to be political

tools of the government of the day. There is no legal right to strike, and union contracts are not legally enforceable. Instead, there exists a "negative" right: unionists are exempt from prosecution for certain actions and, before Thatcher, unionists had a blanket immunity from liability for any action taken "in furtherance of an industrial dispute." So the issue, which has always been one of control, is framed: do unions exist inside or outside the law?

While in power, the Tories have taken revenge through several major bills, particularly a 1980 act creating a "legal personality" classification for unions through which, for the first time, the unions themselves—not just officials or members—could be sued for "illegal" activities. Opening up union funds to the courts has been the key to bringing unions within the law and showing them who rules. The Tories also enacted a vast array of restrictions that made unions increasingly vulnerable to legal action. Secondary actions were essentially banned, as were "political" strikes—a loose term which could include a walkout over a government decision to close down a public agency.

Following Arthur Scargill's 1984 decision not to ballot his miners, secret votes were required before strikes. Picketing was tightly

## Labour's new policy program shifts the party's focus from publicly controlling the economy to fine-tuning it on behalf of industry.

restricted, and Scargill's mobile or "flying" pickets were banned. Closed shops were restricted (pending legislation would bar them outright), and strikers were denied full access to benefits. In a 1989 report summarizing the anti-union onslaught, the United Nations' International Labor Organization cited the British government for eight violations of labor standards, including banning unions from certain government offices, allowing companies to hound out organizers and denying unions the ability to discipline members who scab. Clearly, any unionist would swallow a lot for a Labour government.

**Take two and call me:** The primary pill is Labour's decision to distance itself from the trade unions. As ex-Labourite and SDP adviser David Marquand argued in the May 25 issue of *New Statesman*, this is known as "transcend[ing] labourism" by appealing to the "intermediate groups and non-Labour identities outside the party's core constituency."

On paper, this shift has meant an important change in emphasis on Labour policy. The showcase for Labour's new industrial-relations program is reserved for a charter of rights for employees, a clear appeal to the non-unionized. Except for a proposal to institute a minimum wage, most of the charter's features are merely improvements—though significant ones—over current law. "New realists" within the party, who now grudgingly include leaders of most of the largest

unions, argue that the charter only complements union power. But senior socialist and Labour MP Eric Heffer believes the shift marks a move toward favoring individual protection over collective rights. "It's a fundamental acceptance of Tory ideology," Heffer told *In These Times*.

There are several sweeteners for unions, however. Most important, Kinnock would restrict the total sequestration of union assets, so that an adverse court ruling in one local dispute would not paralyze it from providing benefits or representing other members. Labour also promises to strengthen the legal right to recognition. Companies would be blocked from firing lawful strikers and from creating artificial corporate subdivisions to frustrate secondary actions. And, in a showpiece, a new and efficient industrial court with special labor judges would be created. (Some unionists wonder where the new sympathetic judges will come from and doubt the real value of the venue since appeals will go right back to the regular system.)

The primary features of the Thatcher reformation, however, remain: required ballots, no closed shops, almost no secondary action and no blanket financial immunity. Balloting, in theory an enhancement of rank-and-file control, can be problematic in an environment where the majority of walkouts are spontaneous local events. But unions have also found that they can be a useful bargaining tool and few take issue with the requirement. Labour claims to be following the closed-shop ban imposed by the Social Charter of the European Community, but, according to researcher Walker, there may be sufficient leeway from Brussels for a form of closed shop. Wording on the third provision is revealing: in a shift from a previous draft of the review, the scope of allowable secondary action has been reduced from workers with a "genuine" to those with a "direct" interest in a dispute.

But the essence of the new Labour program can be seen through the keystone issue of liability—the basis for all other restrictions and for corporate attacks. Electoral considerations aside, retaining this law in fact reflects the party's now vastly reduced view of its own role in government. Indeed, the fight that felled Heath was sparked by his labor laws. In the heavily industrialized and publicly owned Britain of the '70s, governments needed union cooperation in order to plan and run the economy. But the unions' position has been undermined in the past 15 years by the shift into services and high-tech industries—typically non-union, low-wage and controlled by multinational corporations. Now, as the policy review plainly announces, Labour does not want to disturb Thatcher's private-sector-driven economy.

"As a result, the role of trade unions has to be restrained," says John Kelly, a labor specialist at the London School of Economics. "In the '70s, Labour and unions were partners. Labour in the '90s sees unions as collective-bargaining agents ... but they don't want [the unions] interfering in the economy." This is a far cry from a party founded by workers to run the state.

**Consumers unite:** Underlying the sea change is a debate over how to reduce the party's structural ties to the unions. The union bloc vote on policy matters at conference (recently reduced to 70 percent, down from 90), has always been a conservative, anti-democratic force. In spite of membership resolutions calling for full repeal of the Tory laws, the unions helped draft and ap-

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prove the policy review. Nevertheless, the Kinnockite wing is pushing to fully open conference votes on regularly updated, "rolling" policy proposals to party membership—in person or by mail.

While envisioning more-politicized members and open structures in the party and in the unions, the left remains convinced that unions are the best force for social change. Kinnock's path is seen as a method to further centralize policy-making power in party headquarters and to cut off real

grass-roots input. Indeed, although the review will be voted on at the fall conference, an unofficial "all or nothing" policy would help ward off any challenges.

There are still serious tactical problems within Labour's electoral strategy. Many of the party's "foot soldiers" in charge of getting out the vote have become disaffected or have been chased off—particularly over the party's refusal to back the widespread movement against paying Thatcher's poll tax. And it is not just the left under MP Tony Benn, Britain's major socialist voice, that is mourning the loss of an inspiring banner. In an internal discussion memorandum leaked to *The Guardian*, the vice chair of the Labour Co-ordinating Committee—the core of Kinnock's own "soft left" wing—scored the review as "sanitized" and "too bland to appeal to the electorate." This, coincidentally, is just the charge the press levels at Kinnock himself.

Nevertheless, Kinnock is convinced the review has given his "new model party" enough maneuvering room to win the next general election, due within two years. With a considerable, if soft, lead in the polls of around 15 percent, he could be right (though Labour will need nearly every one of those votes).

But even if he wins, the tensions in his political strategy—striding right while attempting to hold onto the left—may erupt as working people's expectations and unionist activism rise. Where a Labour government would get the money to pay for these demands, much less for the major investment the country needs, is hard to perceive. While purposefully vague—as is any good pre-election statement—the policy review eschews large rises in government intervention, barring either deficit spending or increases in tax revenue. There will be no "mad dash for growth," it announces in an anti-inflationary credo. New social costs, particu-

larly health and training, will be funded through the "peace dividend."

After a flirtation in the early '80s with a unilateral disarmament stand, the party now displays a renewed fealty to NATO and proposes no constructive response to the events in Eastern Europe. Labour's hope for increased revenues will come from private "wealth creation" through the "realism" of the market—hardly a sure bet.

Shadow chancellor John Smith has completed his "prawn offensive," lurching influential city financiers, and is now charting a quick entry into the European exchange-rate mechanism, a kind of political automatic pilot for currency stabilization. Kinnock may claim after the review that he is in control. But, while distancing himself from his primary power base, he will of course find that real control still lies elsewhere. □

Anthony Borden is a freelance journalist living in London.



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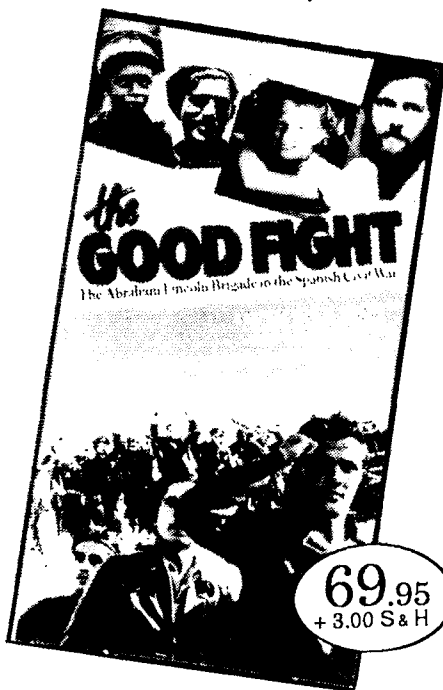
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One year after the massacre at Tiananmen Square, China's leaders are weaker than ever before.

## China's old and dirty hands

By Marie Gottschalk

**O**NE year ago, Chinese troops cut a bloody swath through Beijing as they recaptured Tiananmen, the heart of the capital and the country. Although they succeeded in clearing the square and terrorizing the state, China's current leaders remain under siege, weaker today than at any other time in the Communist government's 41-year old history.

Party chief Jiang Zemin attempted to dismiss the outrage over the killings at Tiananmen as "much ado about nothing" during an interview in early May with ABC's Barbara Walters. Yet in the year since the assault, he and China's other top leaders have been behaving as if they were adrift in a sea of gasoline, fearful that the smallest spark might engulf them in flames.

Immediately after the attack last June 3-4, police and soldiers began rounding up thousands of students, intellectuals and workers. Days later, several workers were publicly tried and executed. A veil of repression quickly descended over urban China as many Chinese severed their contacts with foreigners for fear of government reprisals and spent much of their time attending political study sessions and writing and rewriting self-criticism.

The ever-so-slight chance that the leadership would soften its hard-line stance evaporated in late December with the overthrow and execution of Nicolae Ceausescu. The Romanian leader had been a longtime friend of China, and his rapid and bloody demise stunned China's geron-

ocrats. The government responded by putting its security forces on alert and refusing to make any real concessions on human-rights concerns in the aftermath of the visit by U.S. National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft and Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger earlier that month. President George Bush provoked a storm of controversy by sending the two aides to China even though there had been no let up in the repression and despite an earlier promise to suspend high-level contacts.

"Let's face it," said a senior U.S. State Department official recently in discussing

**Isolated abroad, despised at home, uncertain of the army's reliability and unable to turn the economy around, the current leadership has no greater plan beyond "moving from stone to stone across the river."**

why the trip had yielded so little, "this is obviously a leadership obsessed by internal stability."

**Nothing to my name:** Although martial law was lifted in January, the number of troops visible on Beijing streets this spring rivaled that during the height of military rule. During Qing Ming, the Chinese festival held each April to honor the dead, thousands of police encircled Beijing's cemeteries to guard against any displays of support for the hundreds—perhaps thousands—who were killed last year. The Chinese authorities reportedly even directed florists to remove white carnations, a traditional flower of mourning, from their shelves.

More recently, Chinese officials put a stop to the 10-city national concert tour of Cui Jian, China's best known rock'n'roll star. Cui was originally permitted to go on tour largely because the cash-starved government needs money for the Asian Games, which China will host in September.

The authorities have attached great importance to the games, seeing this "mini-Olympics" as a way to win back some international respectability. Chinese officials were shocked, however, by the sight of thousands of young people raising their fists, flashing the V-for-victory sign and cheering during the first leg of the tour as Cui sang, "I'd give you my dreams as well as my freedom, but you always laugh at me—nothing to my name," the lyrics to one of the unofficial anthems of the democracy movement.

But the Chinese leadership has had a lot more to contend with than seething youth, intellectuals and urban residents. The army remains unreliable, the economy is unraveling and soldiers have been used not only to police the capital but also to enforce

martial law in Tibet and to quell a Moslem uprising in Kashgar, China's westernmost city, in which several dozen people were reportedly killed in April.

Beijing has attempted to buy off the People's Liberation Army (PLA), rewarding it with a 15-percent budget increase, its first real hike in years. Nonetheless, the army remains discontented and sharply divided. Thousands of officers have been under investigation for suspected involvement in the democracy movement, and many of them are believed to be serving in units in and around Beijing. Many of the younger soldiers are disgruntled because of rampant nepotism, and officers are upset because the PLA's primary task has shifted from protecting China against external threats such as the Soviet Union to maintaining internal security.

China is experiencing economic paralysis as well. An economic austerity program initiated in 1988 has brought down the double-digit inflation rate, but at an enormous cost. The People's Republic has had two quarters of no or negative growth—its bond rating has slipped and it has a \$40 billion external debt. Hundreds of thousands of private and collective enterprises in the countryside have been shut down because of a credit squeeze that has left major urban construction projects on hold and tens of millions unemployed.

In a March speech to the National People's Congress, China's nominal legislature, Premier Li Peng stressed the need to tightly centralize the society's economy and political system. But provincial leaders are balking at the austerity program and are openly defying Beijing's attempts to further centralize economic control.

**At the margins:** The current leadership is enfeebled both at home and abroad. The biggest blow to its efforts to project an image of stability overseas has been struck by Xu Jiatao, who until early this year was Beijing's most senior representative in Hong Kong. In May, Xu went on an unauthorized "vacation" to the U.S., fueling speculation that he has defected. If so, he would be the most senior Chinese official ever to defect to the West.

Determined to swim against the democratic tide that swept the world last year and paralyzed by domestic political and economic troubles, China has been marginalized internationally. Its relationship with the U.S. is in tatters, and one State Department official recently predicted that Sino-U.S. relations "are more likely to go downward than upward" in the near future.

The Sino-Soviet summit held in the Soviet Union in April raised barely an eyebrow, and Premier Li Peng and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachov were so far apart on political, economic and security issues that the two countries ended up issuing separate statements rather than a joint communiqué. In February, Chinese officials privately blamed Gorbachov for the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and expressed confidence that he would be replaced when the Soviet leadership met later that month.

Shunned by many Western countries and downright hostile to the recent changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, China has had to turn, as it did in the '60s, to Third World nations to improve its international stature.

While such exchanges are good for China's international ego, they are no substitute for the capital, high technology and



wealthy markets that only the West can provide. And China now stands the risk of losing the two fattest markets it has long counted on inheriting—Hong Kong and Taiwan (see accompanying story).

Hong Kong, the financial center of Southeast Asia, has been hemorrhaging people and money and may be an empty shell by the time Beijing officially takes it over in 1997. According to one poll, one-third of the country's 1.55 million households plan to emigrate by then, and two-thirds of its executives, professionals and entrepreneurs are currently looking for a way out.

Some argue that Taiwan is pursuing a two-track strategy aimed at winning international support for de facto independence without rupturing its burgeoning ties with Beijing. Since China remains politically and economically isolated, as well as desperate for Taiwanese capital, it is not in a strong position to block Taipei's new drive for international respectability and legitimacy.

**Not Eastern Europe:** Isolated abroad, despised at home, uncertain of the army's reliability and unable to turn the economy

around, the current leadership has no greater plan beyond "moving from stone to stone across the river," a popular Chinese expression. That said, no one should assume that China's old men will fall as fast as the Berlin Wall or as hard as Romania's Ceausescu.

China differs from Eastern Europe in a number of significant ways. China's communism was homegrown, not imposed from the outside. Thus, while the roots of communism may no longer run deep in China, the Chinese Communist Party—a Leninist organization—may have a good deal of life left in it because it was created internally, as a result of societal conditions.

Unlike Czechoslovakia, China did not have a viable, Western-oriented democratic tradition prior to taking the communist route. And unlike Poland, where a strong Catholic Church had existed side by side with the Communist Party, there have never been any strong bases of power within China independent of the Communist Party.

China remains a primarily agrarian nation. While the countryside has been restive the last few years over taxes, unemployment,

inflation, corruption and widening income disparities, rural unrest and urban dissent have thus far remained separate phenomena, and peasants have been relatively untouched by last year's disturbances and crackdowns.

While the intensity of last spring's opposition movement was unprecedented—way beyond what the students or leadership had expected—no longstanding experienced organizations existed through which to channel and direct the collective wrath.

China's students were just beginning to organize themselves into a national group and the country's workers were in the midst of forming the nation's first independent trade unions when the crackdown took place. In addition, relations between the students and the workers were quite tenuous. Thus today China has no coherent, organized national resistance movement, and, given the degree of general repression now in existence, one is not likely to emerge soon. "It's as dangerous for a person to stick his head out now as it is for a pig to get fat," one Chinese told a Western journalist.

The overseas democracy movement is unlikely to play a decisive role in China's political future, for it is embryonic and splintered by personal and ideological differences. Moreover, Beijing has been working to intimidate and silence Chinese students abroad by revoking passports, terminating government stipends, restricting contacts with relatives back home and recruiting informants.

The political maneuvering going on today within the highest reaches of the Chinese government is undoubtedly as intense as that during the mid-'70s when Mao was ailing. And, once again, much of the jockeying is taking place behind closed doors. Many in the West and in China expect that significant change will come only when the old men—in particular Deng Xiaoping—begin to die off.

Lowell Dittmer, a political science professor at the University of California at Berkeley, notes that, although the older generation tends to be more orthodox and less reformist, the political cleavages cut across generations—in part because many senior offi-

*Continued on page 26*

## A faltering democracy movement of Hong Kong's own

**B**ETWEEN 100,000 and 250,000 people packed Hong Kong's Central District on June 3 to mourn last year's massacre in Beijing. While even organizers expected no more than 30,000 people to show up, political leaders now hope that the massive demonstration will jump-start Hong Kong's faltering democracy movement.

With China due to take over Hong Kong in 1997, the press has recently focused its attention on the territory's desperate search for emigration sites. But for the vast majority in Hong Kong, emigration will not be possible.

Local organizers have long been lobbying for democratic reform in both China and Hong Kong in order to protect the future of those left behind following the imminent exodus. But they have received little support from Britain, their current landlord, and even less from China, whose leaders have called Hong Kong's democracy movement "subversive."

At least since the First Opium War of 1842, when the British took control of Hong Kong as a drug-trading base, profit—not politics—has been the territory's local obsession.

Last spring's student uprising in Beijing brought Hong Kong out of its political slumber, temporarily. When hopes for democracy in China ended in bloodshed, nearly a million people took to the streets of central Hong Kong to protest the movement's violent conclusion.

"No matter what happens in China now, politics has changed in Hong Kong,"

T.L. Tsim, a political analyst at Hong Kong's Chinese University, told the *New York Times* just before the massacre. "People have come alive." But in the year since, Hong Kong's political movement has collapsed. The mass demonstrations of last spring were replaced by apathy and resignation, and Tsim worried that many activists would leave the country out of frustration.

Now, however, after the mournful demonstration, Tsim is hopeful again. "There is a great deal of resilience in the Hong Kong democracy movement," Tsim told *In These Times*. "Having witnessed the mass rally firsthand, I believe the people of Hong Kong will not give up their fight. They will not be cowed."

**A piece of the pie:** Democracy in China remains an important concern for Hong Kong. "We are Chinese," says Lee Wing-tat, a founding member of the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of the Patriotic Democratic Movement in China, an organization China has threatened to ban after 1997.

As a local politician, Wing-tat also understands that Hong Kong's support of the Chinese democracy movement involves more than simple altruism. "It has become more and more certain that without Chinese democracy, Hong Kong democracy is not sound," he says.

Many in Hong Kong believe that their only hope for democracy lies in a more progressive government replacing the aging hard-liners in Beijing. But political organizers such as outspoken legislator Martin Lee, who led this year's June 3 rally, have refused to take a wait-and-see approach. "When that time will be is anyone's guess," says Lee. "It could be four months. It could be four years. It could be 40 years. We are hoping for the best but working on the assumption that there will be no change."

What remains to be seen, adds Tsim, is whether Lee and his political colleagues can muster the same support for Hong Kong's own democracy movement. When Britain announced in 1984 that it would hand Hong Kong over to China in 1997, it promised democracy for the territory. But on April 4 of this

year, China ratified its Basic Law—the mini-constitution that will govern Hong Kong after 1997. In the name of "convergence"—a smooth governmental transition—Britain conceded nearly every point to the Chinese, giving its blessing to laws that place strict limitations on Hong Kong's democratic power.

Now the people of Hong Kong must decide whether to accept the fate handed to them by the Beijing-appointed, primarily Chinese, Basic Law Drafting Committee, or to fight for reforms that will complicate the changing of the guard later this decade.

The Basic Law provides for the direct election of only one-third of the members of the Legislative Council, Hong Kong's law-making body, in 1997. (Under British rule, Hong Kong has never directly elected a single Legislative Council member.) Furthermore, the legislature will be controlled by a Beijing-appointed chief executive who will have the power to veto any laws proposed by the legislature. Amendments to the Basic Law can be made only with the approval of China's National People's Congress, which has insisted that no changes will be made before 1997.

While public opinion polls show that the people of Hong Kong do want a more democratic government, the general public has been unwilling to openly join the fight. Many are worried by claims that China is keeping records of who participates in the pro-democracy movement, and that those who do will be punished after China takes over.

Many in Hong Kong who recently fled from China feel there is nothing they can do in the face of the Chinese government except to earn as much money as possible in the next few years, says Nelson Chow, a professor at the University of Hong Kong's School of Social Work.

Hong Kong's powerful business community also has been hesitant to demand reform. "We don't want to rock the boat," says a spokesman for the conservative, business-oriented New Hong Kong Alliance. Much of the business sector is convinced that China will give Hong Kong economic autonomy as long

as it shows the mainland proper respect. "China is like a great bear," says one Hong Kong businessman, "and Hong Kong is just a little bee. As long as the bee brings the bear honey, they get along fine. But if the bee tries to sting the bear, he will be eaten in one bite."

**Taking flight:** Since the crackdown in Beijing, Hong Kong's best and brightest have been leaving at a rate of 1,000 a week. But for up to 90 percent of Hong Kong's population, emigration is not an option.

Britain, the last hope for a large-scale abode plan, has made a proposal to grant passports to 50,000 Hong Kong households—about 225,000 people total—as a safety net to keep "important" families from leaving the territory. Even this limited quota has faced fierce opposition in Britain's Parliament, where nationalists are concerned the plan would result in an unwelcome wave of immigration.

For its part, China has announced it will not recognize the British passports and that any applications for foreign citizenship would have to be approved first by Beijing. But even if Britain passes the passport plan with China's approval and immigration continues at its present level, 5 million out of Hong Kong's 5.7 million citizens will still have no place to go.

There has been very little mention of members of "unimportant" families, who work in the watch and garment factories, the banks, ports, stores and hotels which have fueled Hong Kong's economic boom.

While the world celebrates the birth of its new democracies, Hong Kong, a country the size of Nicaragua and Panama combined, is being virtually ignored. Martin Lee and many others blame the lack of stability in Hong Kong on the absence of democratic safeguards. "We must have a democratic government in place before 1997," says Lee. "Britain's approach of kowtowing to China has insured that there will not be one."

—Jeremy Mindich

Jeremy Mindich is a freelance writer based in New York.



# EDITORIAL



## Will the real enemy please stand up?

In recent months African-American iconoclasts have been getting a lot of good press. From the stately arguments of Shelby Steele, a black professor of English at San Jose State University who has been eloquently bashing affirmative action in a variety of literary venues, to the acerbic writing of Stanley Crouch, whose recently published book, *Notes on a Hanging Judge*, debunks a host of cultural and political beliefs, more black thinkers seemingly are eager to oppose the old party line.

Essentially, these men—and they are almost exclusively black men—are contesting the notion that racism is the major obstacle to African-American achievement. This is not a new argument, of course. Black conservatives such as Thomas Sowell, Robert Woodson, Glenn Loury and Walter Williams have been making similar arguments for many years. But these new black contrarians come at the problem from a perspective of former advocates. Steele, Crouch and others, such as University of Massachusetts professor Julius Lester and Harvard Law School professor Randall Kennedy, all once argued the party line with gusto and eventually saw the “error” of their ways.

**From wartime to peacetime:** “There is still racial insensitivity and some racial discrimination against blacks in this society,” wrote Steele in the June 10 edition of the *Chicago Sun-Times*, “but there is also much opportunity. What brought me into conflict with the prevailing black identity was that it was almost entirely preoccupied with the former to the exclusion of the latter. The black identity I was subscribing to in the ’70s—and that still prevails today—was essentially ‘wartime’ identity shaped in the confrontational ’60s. It saw blacks as victims even as new possibilities for advancement opened all around.”

This “wartime” identity has oriented blacks toward compensatory programs—such as affirmative action—that simply perpetuate a sense of victimization, Steele argues. This antipathy for affirmative action is perhaps the strongest link between the new contrarians and the black conservatives. Thomas Sowell, a longtime and insistent critic of race-based preferences, has reinforced those links with his recent book, *Preferential Policies: An International Perspective*, in which he cites global evidence to bolster his stance against affirmative-action policies. What’s more, even a self-professed “progressive” such as University of Chicago sociologist William Julius Wilson, who places himself in neither of the two camps, has expressed serious reservations about the wisdom of race-based preferences.

The emergence of these articulate civil-rights contrarians has provided much grist for the mill of conspiracists who insist they are mere media creations designed to blunt the movement of the Kennedy-Hawkins Civil Rights Act of 1990. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Rep. Augustus Hawkins (D-CA), seeks to strengthen protections against job discrimination on the basis of race or sex—protections that were weakened by a series of Supreme Court rulings last year. The measure has been approved by the Senate and House judiciary committees and is awaiting action on the Senate floor. However, critics of the legislation’s language—including the Justice Department—argue it would open the way for the establishment of hiring quotas. Supporters contend the bill simply restores the right of minorities to bring damage suits for acts of racial discrimination and promotes the use of goals and timetables to help offset the centuries of legalized segregation suffered by African-Americans.

But at the heart of the legislation is the question of whether compensatory methods are appropriate or even effective in addressing the myriad problems afflicting Americans of African descent. Steele

argues forcefully that such methods not only do little to improve conditions but may actually be making things worse by perpetuating the notion of racial victimization. “The quality that earns us preferential treatment is an implied inferiority,” he wrote in the May 13 edition of the *New York Times Magazine*. Steele echoes the view of Harvard University economist Glenn Loury that blacks carry an “inferiority anxiety”—an unconscious fear that African-Americans may indeed be inferior—that prevents them from seizing the opportunities uniquely offered by this country. There is much to commend this psychological explanation for black underachievement, and those insights alone are reason enough to applaud the contributions of the African-American contrarians.

**Spotting the enemy:** But their campaign against compensatory remedies is wrong and out of sync with history. When Steele urges African-Americans to shift from a wartime to peacetime identity and to stop using their victimization as a source of power, he willfully ignores the fact that blacks are victims in a war. When black men in Harlem die earlier than do men in Bangladesh, when fully 50 percent of all black children are growing up in poverty, when infant mortality rates in this country’s inner cities surpass those in Third World countries, when functional illiteracy and joblessness loom as likely possibilities for many black students, there is a war going on. The real question is: who is the enemy?

The enemy is historical evasion. National myth has always cast this country as one conceived by the ideals of political and personal liberty. In order to reconcile those ideals with the reality of slavery, an institution that enslaved and commodified kidnapped Africans, an intense national effort of denial was required. The moral questions raised by slavery’s inherent inequities were too vexing for a self-professed democracy, so U.S. culture evolved a way to evade those questions. Those evasion techniques have since become entrenched as cultural traits. When black contrarians such as Steele urge African-American blacks to call off the war and declare victory, they fail to deal with how they would remedy the massive and multiplying problems of this country’s black citizens, making vague allusions to self-help policies.

African-Americans suffered serious and ongoing damages—cultural, political and psychological—from the centuries of slavery and legal segregation to which they were subjected, and it is becoming increasingly apparent that some effort must be made to repair the lingering legacy of that racist treatment. Pretending we have somehow outpaced the effects of our history may be politically attractive and “realistic,” but it does little to brighten the dim prospects facing too many black Americans. The Kennedy-Hawkins Civil Rights Act of 1990 makes a feeble effort to help alleviate the multiple problems afflicting the African-American community, and in that way it could be seen as a palliative whose purpose is to reduce white guilt while again evading the real issue. But a feeble effort is better than none at all.

Another, potentially more comprehensive, effort has been introduced by Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) in a bill (H.R. 3745) that would create the nation’s first federally chartered commission to study the impact of slavery on African-Americans and the nation and to recommend remedies, including whether payments or “some renumeration action is warranted.” While such a measure would no doubt appall the new contrarians, it would provide for a rigorous analysis to determine, for example, if the heritage of slavery may be at the root of both the social pathologies raging through African-American ghettos and this country’s inadequate response to them.

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# LETTERS

## Suckered

**Y**OUR RECENT PIECE BY JOHN JUDIS (ITT, MAY 23) lauds the work of the Pentagon's research arm DARPA and faults the Bush administration as "retrograde" because funds for DARPA's high-definition television program are being cut back. Has Judis been so taken in by pseudoliberal Washington sources he actually believes that letting the Pentagon design the next generation of TV sets is the answer to the current woes of the U.S. high-tech industrial sector? It is certainly not my answer.

Furthermore, Judis hands us a tired and flimsy "spinoff" argument proffered by some unidentified Massachusetts Institute of Technology scientist that our whole computer industry owes thanks to DARPA for its existence. There is no question that the computer industry in this country has benefitted from military research, but, as your Washington reporter ought to know, this is hardly a desirable or efficient way to set industrial policy.

We in this country already let the U.S. military spend more than two-thirds of all the money our federal government allots for research and development in science and technology. That's two-thirds for weapons, one third to be shared by everything else: research for AIDS and public health, the environment, transportation—the whole lot. For contrast we need only look at Japan, which allots only about 4 percent of its government's R&D money through the military. Japan, instead, has a strong civilian agency—MITI, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry—to spend government funds on projects with direct industrial high-tech goals, no spinoffs needed.

Industrial planning by the federal government is a laudable aim. But with lessening superpower tensions, our goal now must be to wrest our science and technology away from the jaws of the military and to redress the national embarrassment posed by the U.S. military's dictatorship over research priorities in this country. If the U.S. high-tech industry is failing, it is probably because of our military priorities, not, as Judis would have us believe, because we are starting to trim the military's share.

Seth Shulman  
Science for the People  
Cambridge, Mass.

## Misfire

**T**HE GOOD NEWS IS THAT I'M HAPPY YOU GAVE ATTENTION to the usually neglected field of black studies (ITT, May 16). The bad news is that Salim Muwakkil gave your readers a distorted view of what is going on in this exciting discipline.

There are more than just "cultural nationalists" and "cultural theorists" in this vineyard, fortunately. The former are militant—at least verbally—but taken to their logical conclusion, they seem to suggest one should align with Colin Powell and not John Brown or Anne Braden. Some of these forces go so far as to suggest that white supremacy is somehow a genetic phenomenon, ignoring the slave trade and the work of scholars such as Frank Snowden who demonstrate that thousands of years ago relations between Europeans and Africans were not inherently antagonistic. I have yet to discern how this "theory" handles Japanese corporate racism. They liquidate

the class question (and the gender question, to an extent) not only vis-à-vis blacks but also vis-à-vis Euro-Americans. Since so many of these forces seem to follow events in South Africa, I wonder how they deal with the sight of Joe Slovo (the African National Congress and Communist Party leader who is of Lithuanian Jewish descent) addressing cheering throngs in Soweto.

The cultural theorists perform a service when they seek to open the "canon" to people of color and others generally excluded. Yet their studied obfuscation helps to explain their popularity in the ivory tower and also tends to substantiate the theses of Serge Guilbaut and Lawrence Schwartz that elites have sought to promote obscurantism in the arts and literature.

Happily, these two trends do not cover the waterfront in black studies. There is a decided left-progressive trend—in the tradition of W.E.B. Du Bois and Paul Robeson—and many who adhere to it gathered here April 20-22 to ponder the devolution of "white supremacy" in light of the rise of Japan and the erosion of the Cold War (readers can write us for a summary of the proceedings). I would hope that your "socialist" paper could pay more attention to such developments in the future.

Gerald Horne  
Chair, Department of Black Studies  
University of California, Santa Barbara

## Homophobic

**Y**OUR RECENT STORY ON THE BLACK PANTHERS carried a sidebar discussing Warren Kimbro and the New Haven murder case. The text includes the clause, "he was covering his own butt by participating in the interrogation."

This phraseology and all its variants are homophobic, both in syntax and origin. The straight man's terror of sodomy made "covering his ass" so important. Often victorious armies attempted to humiliate their vanquished by anal rape.

Please be gay-sensitive and adopt an editorial policy that purges the newspaper of such offensive rhetoric. It is just as easy and accurate to write, "He was protecting himself by participating in the interrogation."

Phil Bereano  
Seattle

## By any other name...

**N**AN LEVINSON, IN "NEA: COME HELMS AND HIGH Water" (ITT, May 23), misses the point, which is that people with moral standards (including myself) have no intention of censoring any Mapplethorpe type of art!

Let artists wear their fingers to the bone producing and displaying it; we are merely objecting to having our hard-earned money,

paid into government coffers in the way of taxes, being used to fund that genre of art. This is all we are objecting to. Use our money to support government operations—not "art" as it seems to be developing.

Let the people who like to view that sort of art do the supporting of it—all they like—out of their own pockets, not out of mine. We who don't "appreciate" that genre have our rights too—to not support it. That's all.

I have also been objecting to Jesse Helms' obscene use of my tax dollars to subsidize the tobacco farmers in order that their production can kill more people. That is senseless stupidity also.

Johnston R. Hilford  
Houston

## What a deal

**I** READ WITH INTEREST YOUR ARTICLE, "HAZEL Johnson: Talkin' Toxics" (ITT, May 23).

Waste Management's public-relations woman, Mary Ryan, gave us a similar folksy spiel down here. What's she doing calling Mrs. Johnson by her first name? Ryan acts like they're friends and neighbors. "Cooperation," she says. Does Ryan live in Altgeld Gardens?

When Waste Management bought a private landfill here one year ago, it had 17 years' space in it. In a year's time they've dumped so much waste in it (our waste amounted to about 12 percent) that now it's got three years left. They said we needed to hurry up and give them a big expansion (160 feet high, as long as 11 football fields), and they'd be willing to do business with us for 15 years. What a deal!

Waste Management is part of the problem, not the solution. I wish Hazel Johnson the best.

Mercedes Brugh  
Logansport, Ind.

## Fairness in media

**I** AGREE STRONGLY WITH RICHARD L. MILLER'S LETTER (May 16) regarding equal time for response to paid political advertising. Unfortunately, most voters get their "information," if one can call it that, from TV. And worse, they seem to enjoy mudslinging for reasons as perverse as they are mysterious.

In addition to Miller's suggestion, we also need legislation requiring that TV news be reported in a fair and unbiased manner. All we really need to know about the candidate is his/her biography, record and platform. Anything beyond that is editorial opinion and should also include an offer of equal time to the opposition. (During the 1984 presidential campaign, a local news announcer informed us that Walter Mondale hadn't "the chance of a snowball in hell"—

true or not, it was an announcement guaranteed to influence the undecided.)

The Campaign for Public Funding also promotes an alternative to paid political ads, but reactionaries are sure to run still more ads proclaiming that idea too expensive for taxpayers to consider.

Surely fairness in advertising and reporting are what we need. Without it we'll have more deaths in Central America, homelessness and drugs on our streets and lots more dreary news for you guys to report.

Dorothy Ferrier  
Kent, Conn.

## The truth and nothing but

**I** WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE JOEL BLEIFUSS ON his coverage of the Richard Brenneke trial ("The First Stone," May 9 and 16). It's about time that the public learn the truth regarding the improprieties of the Reagan-Bush years.

The public, however, may never realize the extent of these wrongdoings unless the mainstream media begins to get more responsible and cover important stories like the Brenneke trial with enough background information to insure an understanding of its significance, something, as Bleifuss points out, the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times* and *Washington Post* all conveniently failed to do. Short Associated Press reports simply are not sufficient sources of information for an event like the Brenneke trial. Luckily, there are progressive publications like *In These Times* to fill the journalistic void.

The scarce coverage of the Brenneke trial in the mainstream media indicates its real bias and provides one more argument against the premise that mainstream media are "too liberal." A liberal media does not withhold important information from the public, and it does not decide that "there are some things the general public does not need to know and shouldn't," as *Washington Post* owner Katharine Graham said. Well, excuse me, Mrs. Graham, I guess the details of the Richard Brenneke trial do not fall under the "need to know" category.

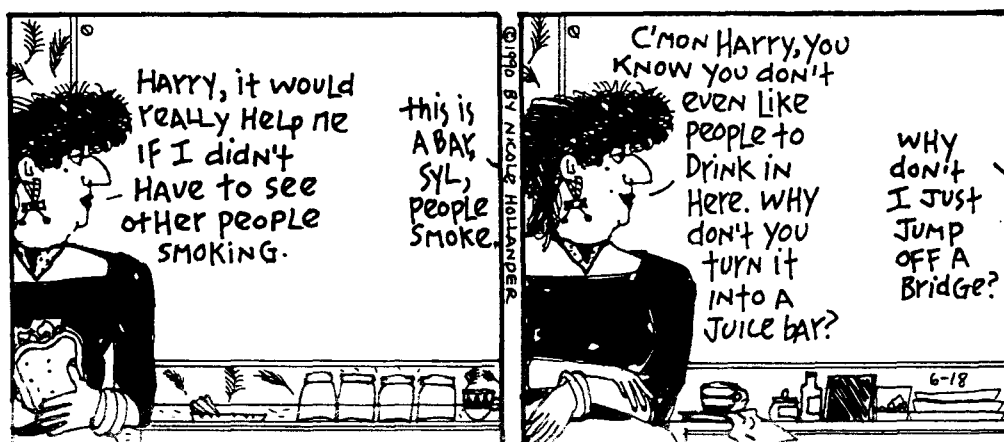
Jesse McDonald  
Stratford, Conn.

## Misinformation

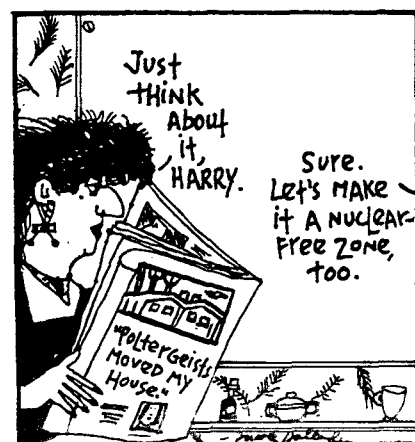
**Y**OUR EDITORIAL (MAY 2) GOES WITHOUT SAYING, though it's important to be reminded that professors as well as politicians promulgate "misinformation" (lies) reflecting prejudice, bias, power plays, ethnocentrism, etc. However, the photo of the death-camp victims and caption below make an equation between scientific 20th-century genocide and 18th- and 19th-century slavery that bears the burden of its own share of misinformation. Crass consciousness?

P. Gershator  
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands

## SYLVIA



## by Nicole Hollander







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## IN THESE TIMES

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IN THESE TIMES JUNE 20-JULY 3, 1990 19



By J.S. Fuerst & Roy Petty

**A**MONG THE MOST WIDELY HELD BELIEFS among urban planners, architects and self-appointed advocates for the poor is that high-rise buildings are unsuitable residences for poor families with children.

As proof, they point to the urban high-rise public-housing buildings where crime and vandalism fester, social dysfunction is rampant and vacancy and turnover rates are extremely high. Frequently they recall one of the most vivid images of the problems of modern social-welfare policy—the spectacular dynamite demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe housing project in St. Louis a generation ago.

Whether high rises are good or bad for families may seem like a technical point for academics and planners to argue over, but in fact it is part of a much larger trend that threatens the existence of much of the urban public housing we now have.

Pleas for the sale or demolition of high-rise public housing are often made by well-meaning liberals in the belief that existing buildings are so bad that there is no way to improve them. Yet these well-intentioned pleas simply play into the hands of conservatives who never supported public housing and developers who are hungry for the land or the buildings for profitable development. (Indeed, the same forces are in play in the movement to turn over public-housing projects to tenant ownership and management—thereby letting politicians rid

## Don't blame architect for high-rise project problems

themselves of responsibility for deteriorating housing.)

One need not be an expert to reach the sensible conclusion that the problems that led to the demolition of Pruitt-Igoe and the tragic deterioration of some high-rise projects in Chicago, Boston and other cities are far more complex than merely a simple failure of architecture. Poor original locations, poor tenancy controls, enormous concentrations of the very poor, socially troubled families, some design flaws, poor maintenance, few supporting social services and inept management have a lot more to do with public-housing problems than how many floors each building has.

Yet the myth that high-rise living automatically leads to problems for low-income families with children persists. In many circles it is "conventional wisdom."

Why does all this matter? Principally because much of the low-income public housing (and privately owned, federally subsidized housing) in the U.S.—indeed, in the world—happens to be in high-rise buildings. And there is increasing pressure—at least in the U.S.—as existing stock gets older and neighborhoods change, either to convert existing high rises to other uses or simply to tear them down, as happened to Pruitt-Igoe.

**The private-greed motive:** The question is complicated by wolves in sheep's clothing, who may argue passionately for the need to move poor people out of the terrible environment of high-rise housing but whose real interests often have more to do with personal economic or political gain.

Nowhere is the issue more urgent than in Chicago, where high-rise, low-income family housing projects have long held a reputation—deserved in many cases and undeserved in others—for being cesspools of crime and despair.

The Lake Front Homes, three buildings on Chicago's South Side that were once home to more than 1,300 families, now stand empty and boarded up while public officials determine whether to renovate the buildings for low-income families or simply tear them down. Several political and economic forces, few directed toward helping low-income families, have suggested destruction of the buildings, and unfortunately a number of well-intentioned people are willing to accept this proposal as a solution simply because they regard high-rise buildings per se as unacceptable for families.

But interviewing low-income tenants in successfully managed high-rise buildings reveals a different view. Almost without exception, tenants in these buildings recognize that the real issues are management, tenant selection and so on—not building height. Most tenants in well-managed buildings express satisfaction with high-rise living. Many insist that they feel safer and closer to their neighbors in high rises than in low-rise housing—exactly the opposite of what many would-be experts contend.

Yet for a variety of reasons—political, economic and sociological—conventional public housing has developed some seemingly intractable problems, particularly high-rise buildings in the poorest all-black neighborhoods. In cities like Cleveland, Detroit, St. Louis, Newark and Chicago, much of the current housing has had a destructive impact on family values. Obviously, a radical change is necessary.

To begin with, these buildings were placed in the poorest and most deteriorated areas. And, ostensibly in order to meet the needs of large families, many high rises were built with high proportions of three-, four- and five-bedroom units, a well-meaning but extraordinarily misguided practice. In addition, tenant-selection practices, as a result of court decisions and inept management, have focused on a policy of making public housing the "housing of last resort" for the poor. Thus many high-rise buildings have been filled almost entirely with minority families with large numbers of children headed solely by women on public assistance.

**Looking the other way:** To make the problems worse, the federal government in 1963 decided virtually to abandon conventional public housing. Instead, its efforts went into new programs of publicly subsidized, privately operated housing. These programs quietly became quite successful, but conventional public housing was left

out in the cold.

Nevertheless, even during the darkest days of the Reagan era, public-housing high rises in a few locations were improved remarkably as the result of thoughtful renovation and innovative management, most notably in Boston and Baltimore. One key to these successes was careful tenant selection and flexible management; another key was dividing up many of the largest apartments into smaller apartments, thus ensuring a mix of small and large families.

Yet despite these successes, high-rise opponents have been and still are frequently successful in eliminating high-rise housing or blocking new construction.

In cities like Toronto and San Francisco, opponents have won the right to limit the height of buildings generally. In cities like Washington, D.C., Cleveland and St. Louis, opponents have brought about limits on low-income family high rises or the conversion of family buildings into buildings for the elderly. In some cities, high-rise opponents have been able to engineer the demolition of high rises, going all the way back to the Pruitt-Igoe fiasco. (That was accomplished even though a Department of Housing and Urban Development committee studying the problem recommended against demolition of more than a handful of the units and argued that the buildings could and should be rehabilitated, remodeled to eliminate top floors and surrounded by low- and mid-rise buildings.) And in both Minneapolis and Forest Hills, N.Y., among other places, opponents were able substantially to reduce the size of planned low- and moderate-income developments.

At Chicago's Lakefront sites, the original plan—to vacate the buildings, with a promise to rehabilitate them—was later changed to a plan to tear them down and replace them with low-rise buildings for low- and moderate-income families. But the cost of demolishing three high rises and then building all new low-rise housing is simply out of the question for the perennially financially strapped Chicago Housing Authority and would probably cost at least twice as much as a decent rehabilitation would.

Former building tenants want officials to live up to their original promise to rehabilitate the units and let them move back in. Many blacks believe that tearing down the buildings is just another form of "black relocation," observing that these units were the only ones ever built on the lakefront. Indeed, there is no doubt that the highly valued lakefront site would be a lucrative plum for real-estate developers, and more than a few Chicago cynics have suggested that the poor's interests are unlikely to outweigh the financial interests of developers and financiers.

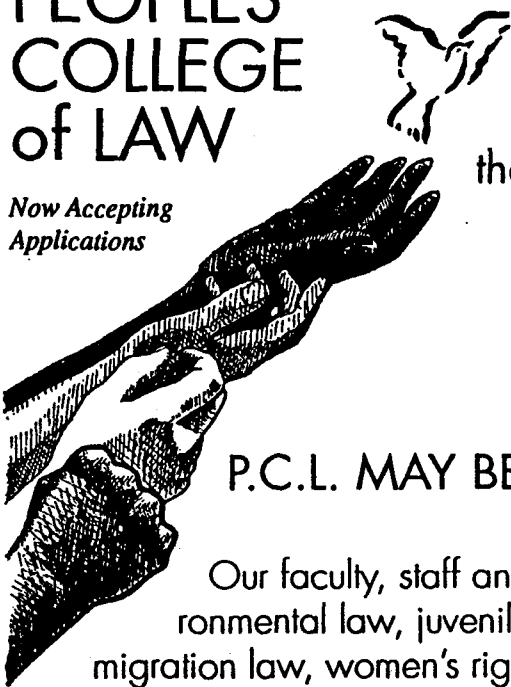
The situation in Chicago is likely to be repeated in city after city, as pressure builds on housing officials to "do something" about the real and perceived problems in low-income housing—and for far too many people, the right answer will be the simplest one: tear it down and get rid of it.

But any proposal to tear down high-rise housing because it is bad for families or because it costs no more than rehabilitation should carefully be weighed against all other alternatives. □

J.S. Fuerst is a social work professor at Loyola University. Roy Petty is a civil rights lawyer in Chicago.

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By Salim Muwakkil

**N**OT TOO LONG AGO AFRICAN-AMERICAN baby boomers were busy bemoaning black youth's grievous ignorance of history; a common anecdote was the tale of the youngster who, upon seeing Malcolm X's name on a list of black heroes, asked, "Who was Malcolm the tenth?"

Though that widely cited incident was probably apocryphal, it reinforced the popular perception that young African-Americans were hopelessly apathetic. The story obviously struck a responsive chord. These days, however, that anecdote would have little resonance. Not only have black youth rediscovered Malcolm X (nee Malcolm Little, a.k.a. El Hajj Malik el-Shabazz), they have adopted him as a past and future role model. Indeed, he is the icon for the "Black is Back" movement currently sweeping through U.S. college campuses. His stern visage peers from posters plastered everywhere from rap concerts to academic conferences. Recordings and transcriptions of Malcolm's speeches are hot sellers in black communities around the country, and he is celebrated in the lyrics of numerous rap groups.

"There are a number of specific reasons for the upsurge of interest in Malcolm among our youth," explains Ron Daniels, an Ohio-based organizer with a long history in the movement for black empowerment. "First of all there's the realization among our young people that conditions for African-Americans have actually deteriorated in the 25 years that Malcolm's been dead." (He was assassinated on Feb. 21, 1965.)

"Another thing that attracts young people to Malcolm's philosophy is his dead-on diagnosis of this racist system in which we live," Daniels adds. "His emphasis on self-reliance, self-respect and black pride, his uncompromising stand on controversial issues, all of this is once again attractive to a new generation of black youth who are being subjected to a resurgence in overt expressions of racism."

**The era of Malcolm:** Daniels is the coordinator of the National Malcolm X Commemoration Commission, a group dedicated to establishing Malcolm's May 19 birthday as a national African-American holiday. The organization held its first national convention last month in his birthplace of Omaha, Neb., and attracted hundreds of representatives from African-American communities across the country who gathered to pay homage to Malcolm's life and legacy.

"While we celebrate the person and principles of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.—and he was a great man—we're living in the era of Malcolm X," Daniels explains. "By that I mean the problems that are currently afflicting the African-American community—like poverty, crime, drugs, premature pregnancies and resurgent racism—were more directly addressed by Malcolm."

Daniels, who also heads the African-American Progressive Action Network, served as executive director of Jesse Jackson's National Rainbow Coalition in 1987 and was Jackson's deputy campaign manager during his 1988 run for the presidency. In the early '70s, Daniels helped form the National Black Political Assembly (NBPA) that brought thousands of people to Gary,

## Keeping Malcolm X alive for generations to come

Ind., under its auspices in 1972, and he later served as president of that group. Although he remains committed to the black-nationalist principles espoused by the NBPA, Daniels also advocates interracial coalitions. He credits Malcolm's example for his embrace of the two strategies that many organizers contend are mutually exclusive.

**Breaking boundaries:** "Malcolm was evolving toward a race-class line by the time of his death," says Daniels, "and that vision is an important part of his legacy. Many nationalists are uncomfortable with his evolving class consciousness, and they want it de-emphasized, while many on the left seek to downplay his black nationalism. Perhaps the most profound thing about Malcolm was his ability to grow beyond categorical boundaries."

Malcolm's life story is a narrative of broken boundaries. He transcended the Nebraska farmboy mold when he opted for life as a hustler and petty criminal on the

### There are a number of specific reasons for the upsurge of interest in Malcolm X among black youth.

streets of Detroit, Boston and New York. While imprisoned for his various misdeeds, Malcolm confounded the stereotype of the lax criminal recidivist by educating himself and strictly adhering to the teachings of Elijah Muhammad and his Nation of Islam (NOI). As an NOI minister and close assistant to Muhammad, Malcolm recruited thousands of African-Americans into the once-obscure pseudo-Islamic cult. He also attracted many sympathizers who remained outside the group.

After he broke with Muhammad in 1963, Malcolm's belief system evolved within a one-year period from the NOI's conservative politics and peculiar genetic theology to radical Pan-Africanism and a theological view consistent with international Islam. Those rapid shifts enabled ideological scavengers everywhere to pluck pieces of his tangled legacy and claim them as their own. Some Pan-Africanists argued that Malcolm's real intent was to prepare black Americans for eventual immigration to Africa. Muslims touted him as a great propagator of Islam. Many black nationalist groups claimed his ultimate aim was to create a black nation within the U.S. And certain socialist groups cited evidence that in his last days Malcolm converted to their Marxist doctrines.

Malcolm's legacy remains clouded by these disparate claims. Daniels contends that debate about where Malcolm was heading is a healthy development. "I don't think that arguing or speculating about Malcolm's positions is necessarily divisive," he says. "Spirited discourse about his legacy can, in fact, bring some clarity to important issues.

Of course, the most effective way to determine his thinking on certain matters is to study his speeches." Daniels says the intention of the Malcolm X Memorial Commission is not to canonize Malcolm-the-personality but to create an enduring vehicle through which to study his legacy and promote political activity based on his ideas.

**What he said:** Despite the varieties of opinion on the nuances of Malcolm's positions, Daniels insists that he was consistent on many issues in his post-NOI incarnation. "After his break with Elijah Muhammad in 1963, Malcolm never wavered from his positions on self-help, self-respect, Pan-Africanism and progressive internationalism," says Daniels. And, he argues, those are the very issues that are attracting young adherents as we enter the '90s.

During a 1964 labor forum speech, Malcolm addressed the issue of his changing philosophy. "I'm still a Muslim, but I'm also a nationalist, meaning that my political philosophy is black nationalism, my economic philosophy is black nationalism. And when I say that this philosophy is black nationalism, to me this means that the political philosophy of black nationalism is that which is designed to encourage our people, the black people, to gain complete control over the politics and the politicians of our own community."

"Our economic philosophy is that we should gain economic control over the economy of our own community, the businesses and other things which create employment so that we can provide jobs for our own people instead of having to picket and boycott and beg someone else for a job. And, in short, our social philosophy means that we feel that it is time to get together among our own kind and eliminate the evils that are destroying the moral fiber of our society, like drug addiction, drunkenness, adultery that leads to an abundance of bastard children and welfare programs."

This program, combined with Malcolm's readiness to challenge whites on any

ground, was an absolute tonic for young blacks of that era who were disgusted by the unrequited violence suffered by their brethren in the King-led civil-rights movement. And although he maintained his identification as a man of the masses, Malcolm's intellect and quick wit proved an able match for even the most knowledgeable adversaries.

**Integration fatigue:** Haki Madhubuti, a Chicago-based author and teacher who is on the commission's steering committee, notes that more than half the attendees at the May 19 Omaha ceremony were young people. "It was very gratifying to see the interests young black people had in finding out all they could about a black leader who's been dead for more than 25 years. Disillusionment with the program of integration—which essentially directed blacks to adopt a Eurocentric world view—and its failures have made these young people ripe for Malcolm's incisive refutation of integrationist schemes."

Some critics have complained that the current youthful interest in Malcolm is nothing but a faddish infatuation with a romantic figure from a mythologized past. But members of the commemoration committee are unfazed by that criticism. "To some extent it is a fad," says Madhubuti. "But these young people had to hear about Malcolm somewhere, and obviously they like what they heard. I'd rather see young people involved with a Malcolm X fad than a crack-smoking fad. The key is to parlay black youth's faddish fascination with him into real knowledge while we have their interest."

According to Daniels, representatives from 76 cities and 25 states participated in the first annual Malcolm X Day celebration. And, he adds, the group is still receiving queries from interested parties around the country. "Part of our purpose is to build a Malcolm X Memorial Center on his home site," says Daniels. "We've already succeeded in winning historical landmark status for the land, and our next step is to facilitate the building of an international center on the spot. One of the most rewarding aspects of this thrust is the fact that it's being done without any external assistance whatsoever."

And that's just the way Malcolm would have wanted it.

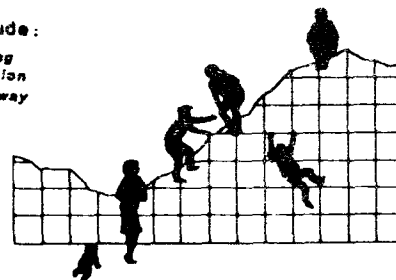
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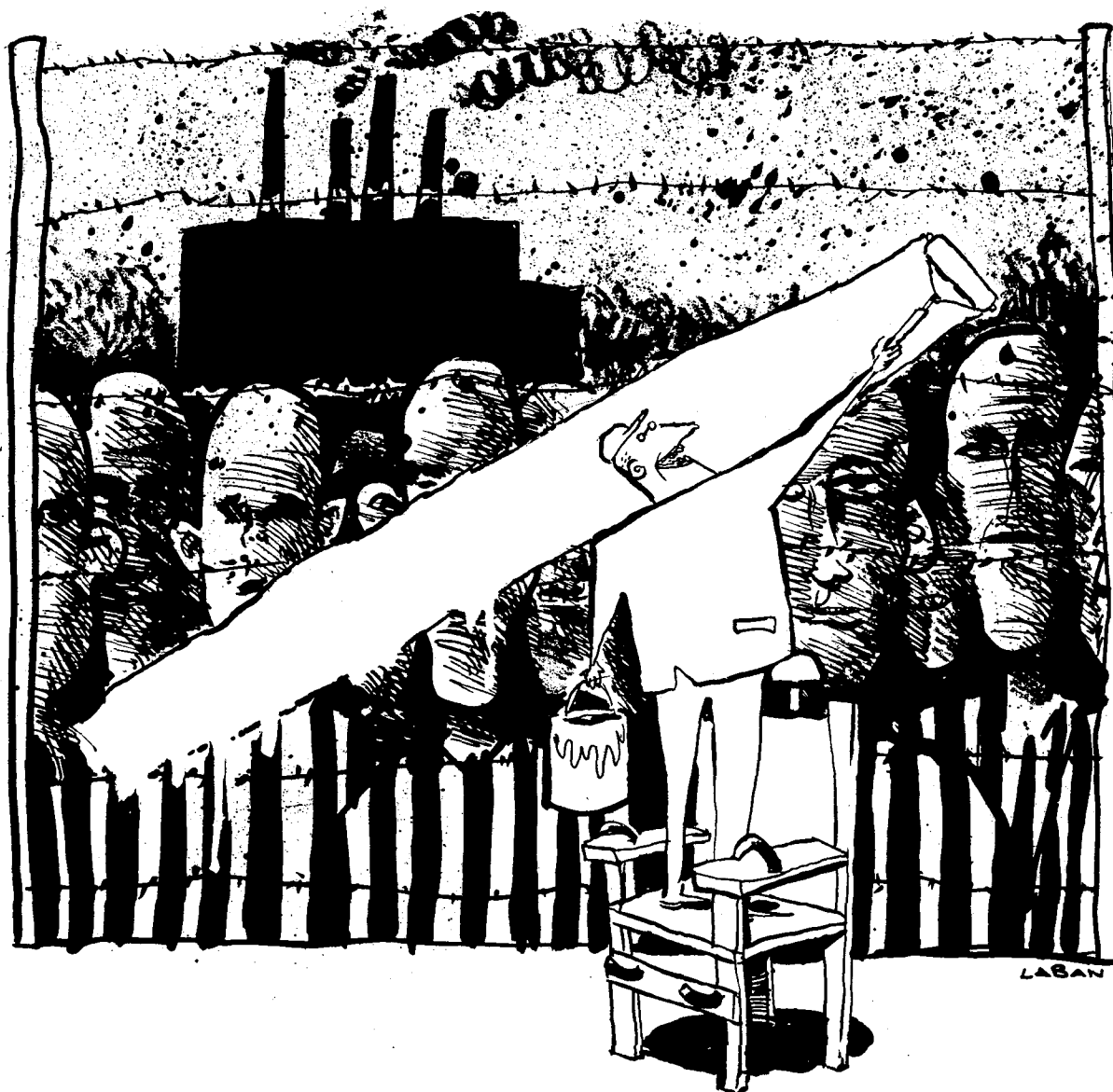
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This year's institute runs from July 29-August 4. Costs are based on a sliding scale from \$200-\$650 and scholarships are available. On-site daycare provided; costs include room and board. The institute will be held at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. People of color are encouraged to apply. THE APPLICATION DEADLINE IS JULY 14th.

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## Fred Leuchter: killing time with death's efficiency expert

By James Bandler

**F**RED LEUCHTER'S GAS CHAMBERS can kill a man in four minutes. His computerized lethal-injection machines puncture veins without rupturing them; they always inject the proper dosages of sodium pentothal, pancuronium bromide and potassium chloride. And his electric chairs? Well, Leuchter wires them to deliver the perfect 2,460 volts. Too few volts, Leuchter explains, and the inmate would suffer needlessly; too many and "you'll cook the meat on his body," creating unpleasant odors and an unnecessary mess.

Leuchter, you see, believes "in making executions as easy as possible—not only for the people who are executed but also for the executioners." That's why he invented the "either/or consideration" mechanism. It's a device with two "activation systems" that lets two executioners pull switches, neither knowing whose lever delivers the fatal charge. This way, explains Leuchter, neither executioner "has the problem of living with it afterwards," and neither feels responsible.

**Old gas chambers:** Readers of last February's *Atlantic* and viewers

of ABC's *PrimeTime Live* learned perhaps more than they cared to know about the work of Fred Leuchter, the nation's only commercial designer of execution hardware. But what they never learned from Susan Lehman's clever article, or from Diane Sawyer's little chat with Leuchter on *PrimeTime Live*, was the name of one of Leuchter's more unusual clients. They never learned that for this client Leuchter performed a very different task than, say, designing a lethal-injection machine for New Jersey or refurbishing an old gas chamber for California.

Leuchter's client in 1988 was a neo-Nazi named Ernst Zündel. On Zündel's behalf, Leuchter traveled to Auschwitz, Birkenau and Majdanek. He took forensic studies at those camps. He made some measurements. And when he returned from Poland, he produced a report that concluded: "It is the best engineering opinion of this author that the alleged gas chambers at the inspected sights could not have then been, or now, be utilized or seriously considered to function as execution gas chambers."

A Torrence, Calif.-based company called the Institute for Historical Review sells Leuchter's findings in a

33-page pamphlet, which comes with charts, graphs and blueprints of the "alleged" gas chambers and crematoriums. For \$20 you can have

### EXECUTIONS

it. It's called *The Lechter Report: The End of the Myth*. "Supplies are limited," the publisher says, so order fast.

Perhaps you wonder how it is that a man can earn his bread this way: making neat and tidy executions one

### Fred Leuchter's client in 1988 was neo-Nazi Ernst Zündel.

day, saying no Jews were gassed at Auschwitz on the next. To those who wonder about what makes Leuchter tick, I offer some practical advice: Just call him up at his home in Malden, Mass. If you're lucky and he has some time, he'll talk with you for a while. He'll speak about his trip to Auschwitz with the measured coolness of a man who has no doubts. It's the same calm tone, you will note, that he uses to discuss the pros

and cons of electric chairs or the hallucinogenic and euphoric effects that hydrogen cyanide gas has before it kills.

**Problems of execution:** There was no way, Leuchter assured me, that any of the facilities he had examined at Auschwitz could ever have been used as gas chambers. "Why, using those facilities," he said, "would be tantamount to trying to operate a gas chamber in your living room! You could kill eight or nine people, maybe, but hundreds? Thousands?"

The "alleged" gas chambers at Auschwitz, he explained, would have been too damp to perform "an execution function." They lacked the heating systems required to bring Zyklon B to its proper killing temperature of 78.3 degrees. Leuchter told me about his forensic tests, which showed low cyanide counts in all of those facilities. He talked on and on until I made him stop.

"Then what did you think those facilities were?" I asked.

"Probably morgues," he answered.

"So it was all a hoax?"

"It's a hoax that the facilities I looked at were gas chambers," he said, choosing his words with care. This did not mean, he emphasized, that there hadn't been atrocities in the camps, that Jews and others had not suffered there.

But as to whether or not there had been a genocide, well, this question was not within his domain of expertise. "I'm not a historian," he said. "It's not my responsibility to determine whether or not there was a Holocaust. My responsibility was to determine whether these facilities were gas chambers, and I know that they were not."

Leuchter told me that he was neither a Holocaust revisionist nor a neo-Nazi. "I'm certainly not anti-Semitic," he added. "I have a good number of Jewish friends."

**Neo-Nazi support:** Fred Leuchter's client in 1988, Ernst Christof Friedrich Zündel, was less circumspect about expressing his opinions of the Jewish Holocaust. It never happened, Zündel was quite certain. The real Holocaust, Zündel believed, was that suffered by the German people at the hands of the Allies. Zündel described the Nuremberg trials as a "disgusting spectacle dreamed up and promoted by the ghetto dwellers from Eastern Europe." Wrote Zündel in 1988, "If you are looking for motivation in my struggle against the lies of World War II and the post-war mess the Allies inflicted on Europe's soul and its people with Nuremberg and their regime of terror—you have found it in the farce and crime that was Nuremberg."

A Toronto-based commercial artist by day and a Holocaust revisionist by night, Zündel co-authored a book, called *The Hitler We Loved and Why*, "to give a different

view to Hitler's Germany." He established a publishing company, called Samisdat, that sold tape cassettes of "German choir, folk and marching songs of the Third Reich Era" and books and pamphlets with titles like *Auschwitz, Dachau, Buchenwald: The Greatest Fraud in History; The Six Million Swindle* and *Did Six Million Really Die?* It was for the sale of the last pamphlet that Canadian officials prosecuted Zündel in January 1988. They charged him with violating Section 177 of the Criminal Code of Canada, a law that prohibits the willful publication of "false news that caused or was likely to cause social or racial intolerance."

Leuchter was one of the dozens of "expert" witnesses to testify on Zündel's behalf. From all over the world, Holocaust revisionists descended on Toronto. To the revisionists, it was not their friend Ernst Zündel who was on trial in *The Queen vs. Zündel* but the Jewish Holocaust—which they scorned as the "Holohoax" and described as the "presumed extermination."

But how to convince the jury, who had grown up believing in the Holocaust and who had been instructed by the judge to take judicial notice as to its existence? An Austrian named Lachout began with a grocery list of concentration camps—Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald, Dachau, Flossenbürg, Gross-Rosen, Mauthausen, Natzweiler, Neuengamme, Niederhagen (Wewelsberg), Ravensbrück, Sachsenhausen, Stutthof, Theresienstadt—where, he said, even the Allies admitted there had been no gas chambers. A Canadian named Lagace disputed the notion that in the Birkenau ovens one could burn 4,400 Jews a day. "Ludicrous!" he said.

Swedish revisionist Ditleib Felderer subdued the jurors with his vacation slides from Auschwitz: 388 shots of crematoriums, morgues and "alleged" gas chambers; and the granddaddy of Holocaust revisionism, Robert Faurisson, held them captive with a six-day lecture on the killing properties of Zyklon B.

For the revisionists, though, Leuchter's testimony would make or break the trial. On April 20, Leuchter presented his findings. He struggled slightly when the prosecutor asked him about his engineering credentials:

"You graduated with a bachelor of arts degree?"

"Right."

"When?"

"You mean what year?"

"What year?"

"1964."

"1964. That's the only university degree you have?"

"That's correct."

"You don't have a bachelor of science degree?"

"No."

"You don't have a master of sci-

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## Holding the Line: Women in the Great Arizona Mine Strike of 1983

By Barbara Kingsolver  
ILR Press, Cornell University  
(Ithaca, NY 14851-0952)  
230 pp., \$10.95

By Tom Good

# Women: theirs, mine and hours

in defiance of the company but also of their union and their husbands. The volatile mixture of '80s feminism and Third World nation-

## LABOR

alism gave the strikers' movement a powerful boost that shocked the company, Gov. Babbitt's state police, traditional unionists and the conservative Mexican culture of

**Kingsolver's remarks are spare and to the point—she lets the women speak for themselves.**

the small Arizona mining communities.

Kingsolver's wonderful knack for getting fascinating interviews (she was a known strike sympathizer) is

the heart of this book. She lets the women speak about their lives, and what they have to say is far more interesting than any added commentary could be. Kingsolver's remarks are sparse and to the point. She's like a great documentary filmmaker. As a fiction writer (*The Bean Trees* and *Homeland and Other Stories*), she came to this project without an overloaded academic agenda. It is easy to see how she won the respect and trust of the women strikers.

She gets a graphic description of just what is involved in the deadly job of being a miner: "One of the worst jobs, they agreed, is cleaning the stacks. Each smokestack has a door that opens at the bottom so a worker can go in and clean it out. 'That flu ash is really hot,' Margaret said. 'They're supposed to wait to send you in there until it's cool—below 120 degrees. But sometimes they don't, and that dust falls down on you. It's got arsenic and stuff in it and it's hot. One guy got buried

in it up to his waist.'"

**The international dodge:** The 1983 strike began when Phelps Dodge turned down an offer by the United Steelworkers of America, the United Transportation Union and the International Chemical Workers Union to freeze wages for the duration of a three-year contract, conditional upon the retention of cost-of-living protection tied to the consumer price index. The unions recognized that times were bad in the industry. Kennecott Copper, ASARCO, Magama Copper and Consolidated Copper accepted the unions' offer. Phelps Dodge, with \$2 billion in assets and with mining interests in Peru, South Africa, Mexico, Chile and the Philippines, demanded that the Arizona miners take further cuts in wage scales, benefits, holiday and vacation time and cost-of-living protection. The miners walked out on July 1, 1983.

Phelps Dodge quickly won a court injunction keeping miners away from the plant gates. The union women stepped in and replaced the men on the picket line. Babbitt sent in 400 state troopers and seven units of the Arizona National Guard to occupy Clifton and neighboring Morenci. The townspeople were stunned by the governor's action. "Townspeople who were initially neutral grew infuriated by the display of force and placed their hearts and their feet behind the strikers' side of the line," writes Kingsolver. Iron-fisted repression, police riots, tear-gassing, intimidation and felony arrests brought a reign of terror to the community, dubbed "Poland USA" by the strikers.

The company cut all medical care to the strikers, sought to evict them from company housing and, last but not least in "right to work" Arizona, fired them. Phelps Dodge was merely pursuing policies it had always maintained in the town it owned, Morenci, and the towns it controlled, Clifton, Ajo and Douglas.

The striking miners responded with mutual aid and militant picketing of incoming scabs. Women strikers threw rocks and carried chains and baseball bats. Scabs threatened them with guns. As the strike wore on, the communities became bitterly divided when some residents went to work in the mines. The Phelps Dodge doctor, Jorge O'Leary, and his wife Anna joined the strikers and set up a People's Clinic, which became the hub and symbol of strike resistance. Anna O'Leary helped to form a clothing exchange so families could continue to clothe their children. Women had their own meetings, backed a dissident male union leader of the United Steelworkers of America over local objections and

started hanging out in bars together to the shock and dismay of their husbands.

A number of the women became articulate public speakers and toured the country in support of the strike. Kingsolver documents through her interviews how the strike fundamentally changed the lives of the community's women. The women's movement clearly went beyond the strike, altering their views of themselves as homemakers, their relations with their husbands and their views of their own possibilities in life. The women were the real monkey wrench in this strike.

**Textbook case and subtext:** The issue of feminism in the 1983 strike raises several questions. On the face of it, the miners' militant strike and mutual aid appears to be a textbook case for a Marxist labor history class. Phelps Dodge couldn't be a more ruthless capitalist enemy, and Babbitt (or "Scabbitt," as he was called), despite the image created for him in the last presidential election by some public-relations firm, was the perfect example of the state acting on behalf of capital to repress workers. Yet despite this, the women did appear to be breaking down the Marxist model. They talked of education, of new roles for children that would transcend the narrow world of their previous lives.

The world of the mines and the industry was on the brink of a major transformation. Market changes and environmental protests (Phelps Dodge was a major Southwest polluter) eventually resulted in Phelps Dodge closing most of its Arizona operations and selling part of its Morenci interests to a Japanese company. Thus, in some respects, the strike and its aftermath bear a resemblance to familiar "rust belt" stories. It may also be true that Kingsolver doesn't give enough emphasis to the very rancorous divisions in the mining communities or to those people who disliked both Phelps Dodge and the unions.

In the end, conflicting emotions cloud an assessment of the strike of 1983: disgust at the brutal tactics used to break the strike, cynicism that Babbitt managed to portray himself as an enlightened liberal in the Democratic presidential primaries of 1988, admiration and amazement for the women strikers. And there are lingering doubts that the strike wasn't, after all, another swan song for unionism in the '80s, for a union movement mired in its own conservatism, with its "auxiliary" of brave women in revolt now scattered to the winds, trying to maintain their hard-won independence in low-paying office jobs and the fast-food opportunities of the Reagan/Bush utopia. ■

Tom Good, a writer living in Arizona, is a contributor to *The Year Left*, forthcoming from Verso Press.

Women of color were the wild card in the Great Arizona Mine Strike.



Ph. Chaff



By Pat Aufderheide

## Plug that product

If you think you're hearing an awful lot of commercial references on the news, you're right. A recent study by *Advertising Age* and Northwestern University's journalism school found, in one 24-day period on the three major TV networks, 360 plugs for brand names on news shows alone. Plugs varied from prominent display of the Levi's badge on an actor's jeans to casual references to McDonald's in a movie review. (Some plugs were negative—such as repeated mentions of Delta Airlines in a story about an airplane crash.) Variety shows such as Johnny Carson's and feature news shows such as *Today* also were heavy pluggers. The networks all have policies against flogging brand-name products, but with the truncating of their standards-and-practice divisions it's doubtful anyone has time to care. If brand names dot the news, that's not too surprising; after all, they're pervasive in daily life. But the real question is when the networks are going to start formalizing their relationship with their pluggees, like the movie industry has done to the tune of \$1 million a week.

## Plugs for ourselves

The networks might be practicing for a plug-pro-quo future on their own schedules. The practice of hyping a network's own programs on its news show has become pandemic. As *Variety* recently reported, on Oscar night, ABC—which broadcast the Academy Awards—ran a three-minute special news report on the coming event (other networks barely mentioned it). When a *thirtysomething* character suffered ovarian cancer, *Nightline* somehow came up with that issue for the same evening. This kind of synergy isn't accidental. When NBC's entertainment division developed the miniseries *Drug Wars: The Camarena Story*, it actually worked closely with the news division. Not only did NBC news footage appear in the miniseries but NBC's evening news soaked its newscasts with drug stories, uncovering the story in comparison with its competitors two-to-one.

## Video plugs while-u-wait

It's getting harder and harder to find new places to plaster ads. But mega-magnate Rupert Murdoch has figured out a new way to reach women: a half-hour videocassette for beauty parlors. His incipient video-publishing business follows the Chris Whittle trend of target marketing. (Whittle built his empire, now shared with Time Warner, with *Special Reports* magazines, showcased in doctors' waiting rooms. The doctors have to agree to drop most other magazines.) And Murdoch's Salon Network is only one of several new targeted video-publishing ventures. Lifetime TV (a joint venture of Hearst, Capital Cities/ABC and Viacom) is now launching a video network for doctors' waiting rooms. Also in the brainstorming process are a host of video magazines for special audiences, such as a cassette for do-it-yourself redecorators by the publisher of *Better Homes and Gardens*, made for Sherwin-Williams paint. Then there's McDonald's new half-hour videocassette for kids, *McTreasure Island*, in which Ronald McDonald magically sparks up the Robert Louis Stevenson story.

## Infomercials grow up

When the Reagan-era Federal Communications Commission (FCC) dropped the rule limiting the amount of commercial time a station could broadcast per hour, the TV infomercial business was born. Infomercials are those programs that look vaguely like talk or news-feature shows (but tackier) and sell get-rich-quick, weight-loss and start-your-own-business-at-government-expense schemes. They've been a boon to independent stations hungry for programming that pays its way (sometimes the station even gets a cut of the profits). But they've been less good for guillible consumers. It seems many viewers don't distinguish between infomercials and regular programming—which will come as no shock to the infomercial makers, who depend on this confusion. Now the FCC has charged one infomercial-maker with lying and cheating, and Congress—smarting from one show that promised would-be entrepreneurs there was free government start-up money—is holding hearings. But Congress will have to move fast. Just as quickly, the infomercial industry is getting more sophisticated. Zoning in on kids—who've been slipping away from the old-fashioned "He-Man" approach to sugar-coated salesmanship—advertisers are slipping short infomercials seamlessly into broadcast programs such as *Video Power*, about video games. Executives are rejoicing that they're beating kids' short attention spans, while public-interest activists are gnashing their teeth. After all, they point out, little kids already have trouble distinguishing ads from programs. Apparently, so do adults.

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## Killing time

Continued from page 22

ence degree? You don't have a Ph.D. in science?"

"Correct."

"You don't have a degree in engineering?"

"That's correct."

Save these small difficulties, Leuchter's presentation went without a hitch. Faurisson exclaimed that during Leuchter's testimony, he "was witness to the death of the gas-chamber myth."

The jury, however, did not concur, and Zündel received a nine-month sentence. Said Faurisson of Zündel: "He thus joined Galileo."

**Not responsible:** A quick call to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) of B'nai B'rith's national headquarters in New York City put matters into a somewhat different perspective. To the ADL it was clear: Zündel was no Galileo and Leuchter was no neutral, responsible engineer.

Leuchter, according to the ADL, had accepted \$37,000 from a neo-Nazi to produce a report that, despite the overwhelming evidence to the contrary, concluded that there had been no gas chambers at Auschwitz. Said ADL research analyst Judith Bolton, "His report is clearly suspect. It's clearly rigged."

Then, a year after his trip to Poland, Leuchter traveled to California, where at a convention sponsored by the Institute for Historical Review (a propaganda arm of the anti-Semitic Liberty Lobby) he entertained with stories of his adventures in Poland—tales of being chased over fences and around buildings by guards at the Auschwitz memorial. The facts were the facts, Bolton said. Leuchter was "a willing participant in the anti-Semitic Holocaust revisionist movement."

Leuchter sounded almost hurt when I told him about my conversation with the ADL and about the unkind things they had said about his report. "If they want to call it a crock, it's up to them," he said. "They're not being reasonable. Either they don't understand the report or they are refusing to understand it. As I say, I'm not grinding an ax. I really don't think anybody—including the

ADL or JDL [Jewish Defense League]—would fault me if they really knew me. I don't think they would."

"But can you see how Jews might react to what you wrote? Don't you see how this might be seen as something of an emotional issue?"

"It's a very emotional issue," he agreed.

I asked him if it bothered him that anti-Semites were selling his report and by doing so were hurting Jews.

"Look, I published a report. The report is factual. As far as what other people do with it, I can't control that. It's not my responsibility to do that."

**Dinosaur of death:** Fred Leuchter designs machines that kill people. But someone else must pull the switch. Curious as to how the switch-pullers felt about Leuchter's work, I called San Quentin, where the gas chamber Leuchter spruced up waits for the Ninth Circuit Court to decide on Robert Alton Harris' appeal. Constructed in 1937 and last used in 1967, it's a dinosaur of a gas chamber

## "We carry out executions using a team concept," said a spokesman for San Quentin prison.

and not nearly as high tech as the one Leuchter built for Missouri. But not to worry, San Quentin officials assured me, it was more than capable of getting the job done, both painlessly and efficiently. "It's no more dangerous than an electric chair," promised Public Information Officer Cal White. To prison personnel, he meant, of course.

When I called White, he talked enthusiastically about execution procedures at San Quentin for quite a while. When I asked him about Fred Leuchter, he grew quiet.

"He did refurbish your gas chamber, didn't he?" I pressed.

"I won't confirm or deny that."

"But Leuchter told me that he worked for you. Why is the identity of your contractor confidential?"

"It's just that the warden feels that that gentleman is a part of the team," White said. "All the team members' names are kept confidential."

"The team?"

"Yes, we carry out executions here using a team concept," White explained. "Twelve people partake in it. There's a security watch man, a man on the telephone, someone who mixes the chemicals, someone who has to pull the lever.... It all goes together. It's not a one-man show."

"And the man who refurbished your gas chamber is just another member of the team?"

"That's right."

I thanked White for his help and said goodbye.

**Getting philosophical:** Before I finished up with Leuchter, I asked if we might talk some more about capital punishment, about why he had gotten involved in it in the first place.

"I wouldn't have gotten involved in it," he replied, "except that I'm concerned about what's done in my name. I don't want anybody to be tortured and I don't think you do. People should be executed with the proper dignity. We don't want anything to come back on us that we did anything wrong."

"But doesn't it worry you," I asked, "that all of the modernizations, the team concepts for execution, the lethal-injection machines, the 'either/or consideration' mechanisms—might serve to make executions too easy? This may seem naive to you," I said, "but we're talking about killing people, not about putting animals to sleep."

Leuchter tried to placate my fears. This was the modern era, he reminded. Executioners were sensitive, caring people who took what they did seriously. "We've not cave-men," he said. "We're responsible people. I don't think anybody would benefit from an executioner who did not care, an executioner who said, 'Let me do it! I'll pull that switch!'"

"That," Leuchter said, "will be the person who will cause the Holocaust."

"You got me philosophizing," he added. "I don't usually philosophize."

James Bandler is a writer living in Massachusetts.





By Pat Aufderheide

**A**RNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER IS the ultimate postmodern macho man. He's cartoon-brawny, a self-invented character you can be impressed by and spoof at simultaneously. And what's more, he seems to thrive on being patronized. He's he-man silliness without guilt, a sugar-free chocolate sundae. Like Ronald Reagan, he seems cheerfully untroubled by doubt, anxiety or the distinction between public persona and private person.

Schwarzenegger also cuts through generational and class barriers, because of his multifaceted appeal. (Do you go to laugh at the accent, or to watch the muscles ripple, or just to watch him pull it off with a straight face?) And he's delivered some good performances—lately in *The Terminator* and *Running Man*. Surprisingly, for the enthusiastically conservative star, his recent films have touched, sometimes poignantly, on the cost of high-tech, top-down, consumer-thrills civilization.

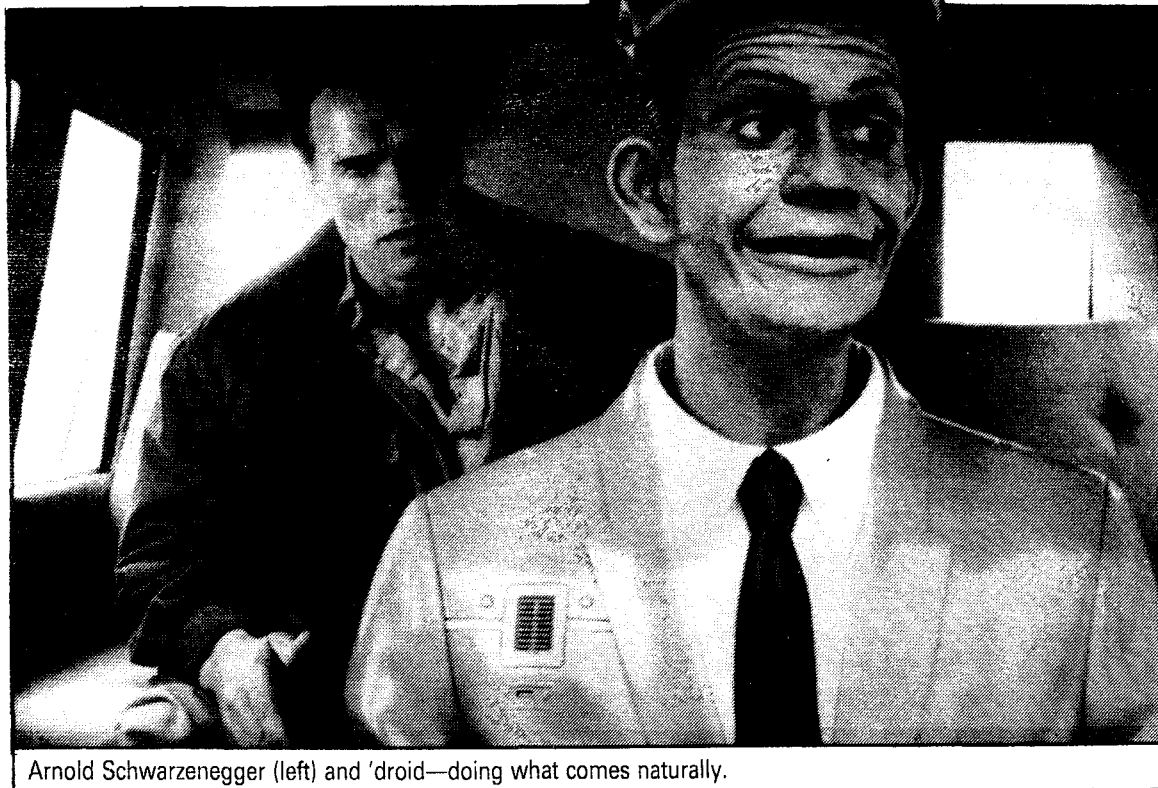
In *Total Recall* he was paid \$11 million for his schtick. Schwarzenegger's routine does overcome the film's production excesses and poverty of imagination well enough to pack ticket buyers into the movie-houses. But *Total Recall* caters to his persona so abjectly that it creates a shiny surface image and, ironically, makes his character more forgettable than any recent film performance.

**The Trouble With Money, Part 13:** The economics of the summer season may have influenced the film's choice for surface theatrics and cheap but familiar stereotypes. *Total Recall* is the third entry (after *Bird on a Wire* and *Back to the Future III*) in a brutally competitive summer, from a distributor—Tri-Star—desperate for a hit.

Several studios have also bet on superproductions like *Dick Tracy*, *Die Hard 2* and *Another 48 Hours*. *Batman's* blockbuster precedent last summer upped the ante not only for big-budget spectacles but for tie-ins across the board. The stakes are so high (*Total Recall* is up around \$60 million) that most gamblers must lose—there are only so many movie-going hours in a summer and so many movie-goers. True, licensing has gone through the roof, but even the guys selling Brut 33 with a Schwarzenegger tie-in and Dick Tracy lunchboxes are being tentative.

Yet nobody can afford not to play. What counts in the competition for summer eyeballs are stars, action and glitz. *Total Recall* has all three; it's a by-the-numbers entertainment machine. The only sad thing is that it promised more.

Schwarzenegger plays an ordinary guy who's betrayed by everyone, including by his own mind. His problem: which of his realities is real and



Arnold Schwarzenegger (left) and 'droid—doing what comes naturally.

## Recalled for factory defects

which have been implanted? Is he a construction worker on Earth in search of a simulated vacation? Or an agent from the Mars colony who's been given an imaginary Earth past? Or a double agent backing the Mars rebellion? Or maybe a triple agent, ferreting out the rebels?

The tale is drawn loosely from a short story by Philip K. Dick, the legendary science-fiction author. He sketched horrifying and paranoid visions of life under late capitalism and lived long enough to see some

### FILM

of them come true. For instance, he created a Reaganesque, media-made presidency in *Simulacra*. (Dick died just before the release of *Blade Runner*, whose plot had a family resemblance to the Dick novel from which it was taken.)

**Problems with Dick:** For Dick, identity and an individual's ability to control it was a central theme. His heroes are usually hapless, self-doubting putzes, betrayed first by nagging, put-upon wives—Dick had a problem with women—and then by advertisers, greedy bosses and corrupt governments. Finally, they are betrayed by their own inability to locate the center of their lives, which is partly their problem and partly generated by the casually vicious social systems that erode community around them.

The concept informing the slight short story on which *Total Recall* is based is truly chilling. It is similar to the haunting problem at the core of *Gravity's Rainbow* and other post-modern fiction: are your firmest convictions part of a game somebody else is playing with you?

*Total Recall* moves far from this vision. The center of the film, after all, is Schwarzenegger. And he's not

hapless. He's so big, brave, innocent and invincible that he's deliciously implausible. Schwarzenegger, playing a man sometimes named Quaid and sometimes Hauser, has no problems that a little bit of physical violence can't fix, as we learn when a sneaky psychologist tries to trick him into believing that his current reality is just a dream. Ka-pow!

His enemies are all the kind that an untroubled, muscled everyman can handle. First, the women: Dick feared them, but this movie just despises them. Unlike Dick's standard portrait of the passive-aggressive, disillusioned wife, both of Schwarzenegger's women are cookie-cutout movie bimbos. The bad bimbo is blonde (Sharon Stone) and the good one is brunette (Rachel Ticotin), but both tote a mean submachine gun and both adore their man. He bemusedly humors them both—until he knocks off the bad one.

**Effects and defects:** And it's clear from the start that there is no system big enough to outfox him. He quickly scopes out the Mars situation—an evil and corrupt elite is controlling the colonists with limited air supply—and joins the rebels, many of them mutants as a result of generations of hazardous working conditions. Despite some confusion about whether he's double-agenting on the rebels, he manages, nearly singlehandedly, to save not just the day but the planet. The bad guys keep trying to confuse Arnold, but we're never confused about who the real villains are—which would be much scarier than all that predictable gunslinging.

The head villain (Ronnie Cox, who played the same role in *Robocop*) does make an amusing riff on real life by adopting some classic Nixon-esque gestures. They'll be missed, of course, by anyone under 30, but it's a nice touch. Occasional subtleties

like this convince you that the movie's blinding banality was a choice.

*Total Recall* does play on a pervasive cynicism about large institutions. This puts it comfortably within the subgenre of science-fiction film developed over the course of the '80s. Dystopia became more common than utopia, and little guys played out their drama against faceless but often cruel systems more dangerous than the aliens.

The good guys here are the underground resistance movement that the colonial Mars government dubs terrorist. But the film's pro-resistance stance is as much tailored to

### Director Paul Verhoeven's black humor is virtually absent in *Total Recall*.

Schwarzenegger's persona as the underdog terrorism of the *Rambo* films was tied to Sylvester Stallone's. It's shameless populism amalgamated with that widespread aggrieved sensibility that seems to grow faster than the deficit. The victory of the little people in *Total Recall* is a triumph of the democratic everyman against a handful of greedy, heartless, imperial creeps. It's failsafe, familiar, comforting; the TV miniseries *V* successfully played this one. It's December in Romania on Mars, without the January to follow.

**Blowing it:** The movie's plot and production design create a molded context for Schwarzenegger. They offer up the same peculiar mix of mayhem and self-deprecation. The director, Dutch filmmaker Paul Verhoeven, is famous for his dark vision

and a violent appetite cultivated—as he says frequently—in a World War II childhood packed with bomb explosions. His first American feature, *Robocop*, came after a series of European art-house successes, including *The Fourth Man*. It took audiences and studio executives by surprise—not only for its pedal-to-the-floor violence but also for its flashes of humor.

Here, Verhoeven's black humor is virtually absent, and his staging of violence is big but dumb. *Total Recall* sets some kind of record in on-screen action, and some of it is gruesomely gory—spikes in the neck popping eyeballs, use of the bullet-ridden body of a civilian as a shield. But it doesn't shock very much.

That's because, overall, the violence is pretty familiar. There's not much science-fiction imagination or psychological canniness at work here—no Hitchcockian suspense, no sly play on disgust at the birth process that crept up *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and *Alien*, no bureaucratic horror à la *Brazil*, no romance with the Other. As in *Robocop*, the action's mostly about guns and more guns. And then some big explosions. Not that guns aren't horrifying in real life, but shoot-outs lost their novelty in the movies some decades ago.

Given the film's futuristic setting, in fact, it's downright surprising how old-fashioned the movie's tools of death are. As the film's villains keep noticing for our benefit, it's dangerous to shoot guns in a place where the dome enclosing your own air is always within range. But that doesn't stop the three-ring circus-of-death action.

*Total Recall's* special effects—brought to you by a battery of companies, including Lucasfilm's Industrial Light and Magic—also go for the surface spectacular at the expense of any underlying imagination. Miniature sets creating awesome alien landscapes are matched, with the latest technology, to earlier scenes shot with actors. The mutant makeup is creepy but poignant.

There are a few big toys, like automatic taxis and an artificial woman's head that serves as a convincing disguise for Schwarzenegger. But the effects don't give an edge to the terrifying issue of doubting your identity. They're either big jokes or show-off set pieces. (Not-so-special effects include commercial plugs, especially for Sony, a corporate relative of Tri-Star.)

*Total Recall* will probably get the job done this summer for Tri-Star, and its violent theatrics will stand it in good stead in overseas sales. But it's a disappointing and oddly ordinary movie in a provocative genre, and it squanders the less-obvious talents of its megastar. *Total Recall* is sodden testimony to the witlessness of studio megablockbuster strategies.

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# China

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cials have, over the last few years, exacted the right to name their successors as a condition of their forced "retirement" from the Politburo and other top governmental bodies.

Anyone who expects Yang Shangkun, Li Peng, Deng Xiaoping and the other hard-liners to mellow and embrace reform à la Poland's Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski are likely to be mistaken. "Events in Poland prove that making concessions provides no solutions," warned Deng in a statement widely circulated among party cadres weeks before the crackdown. "The greater the concessions the government made, the greater the opposition forces became."

**Keeping hope alive:** Last spring, China's top leaders believed that the Communist Party was fighting for its life. But in the year since, nothing has happened to convince

them that they have won the war. By choosing repression over reform, the leaders have mortally wounded themselves—though their demise will not necessarily be as quick as those who were mowed down by armed personnel carriers and machine-gun fire last June—and they have fanned the flames of the very chaos and instability they claimed they were trying to head off.

Today Chinese are resisting the government like never before. Unlike previous political campaigns, people are maintaining their silence, refusing to turn in to the police neighbors, colleagues, relatives or strangers. Despite a massive dragnet, many leading dissidents have escaped abroad. And despite a massive police presence, hundreds of Beijing University students and teachers dared to demonstrate one year after the bloody crackdown began.

In trying to assess whether China's future is leaning more toward hope or despair, one

is reminded of what Chinese writer Lu Xun said during the May 4 Movement for freedom and democracy that convulsed China more than seven decades ago. In 1921 he wrote: "Hope cannot be said to exist, nor can it be said not to exist. It is just like roads across

the earth. For actually the earth had not roads to begin with, but when many people pass one way, a road is made."

Marie Gottschalk is an associate editor in charge of Asian affairs for *World Policy Journal* in New York.

## C A L E N D A R

### CHICAGO

June 7

The Chicago Women's Caucus for Art will present a program in conjunction with the recent exhibition "WOMEN SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES." This program, narrated by Silva Malangrio and Angela Kelly (curators), will discuss issues of violence toward women and present slides of the work included in the show. The public is invited to attend at 7 p.m. in the ARTEMISIA Gallery, located at 700 N. Carpenter St., 3rd Floor. For more information, contact Patricia Friedt, CWCA publicity chairperson, (312) 930-4638.

July 13-14

Pledge of Resistance National Convention, July 13-14, 1990; Chicago (De Paul University). Participate

in setting the political priorities, program and overall direction of Pledge of Resistance for 1991. Learn from /share with Central American activists from around the country, participate in workshops, hear well-respected speakers, be prepared for some fun! Call (202) 328-4040 or write National Pledge of Resistance, P.O. Box 53411-3411, Washington, DC 20009-3411.

### THE SOUTH

June 24-July 4

A SOUTHERN AFRICAN-AMERICAN LEADERSHIP TOUR. Venues: Dallas, Shreveport, Lafayette, Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Montgomery, Atlanta, Memphis, Mary Esther, Pensacola, St. Louis and Kansas City. Oba T'Shaka, author of *The Political Legacy of Malcolm X* and *The Art of Leadership*, featured speaker. Dates still available. For complete information and particular locations per city: (504) 356-0076.

### SANTA CRUZ, CA

June 30

**SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE:** Balancing Social, Environmental and Economic Concerns, a Workshop to Create a Research and Policy Agency for Tomorrow; at the University of California, Santa Cruz. The purpose of this one-day conference is to help further define sustainable agriculture and develop specific ideas for translating the concept into reality. At the conference we will provide a forum in which a broad range of people can come together to discuss their views, develop a collective statement of the needs participants believe sustainable agriculture must address, and create a research and policy agenda for helping to shape agriculture to meet those needs. The ideas discussed during the workshop will be published as a "Research and Policy Agenda for Sustainable Agriculture." Although there is no registration fee, we ask you to preregister by June 15. For more information, contact Barbara Laurence, Agroecology Program, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA 95064, (408) 459-3240.

### NEW YORK

July 3-27

**THE NEW YORK MARXIST SCHOOL**  
**THEATRE WORKSHOPS WITH AUGUSTO BOAL:** Theatre and Social Change; Tuesday, July 3-Sunday, July 8, 1-6 p.m.; \$500. Designed for people involved in creating bridges between theatre and community activism. **THEATRE AND THERAPY;** Tuesday, July 10-Sunday, July 15, 1-6 p.m. \$500. Designed for workers in the mental health and human services professions. **SUMMER INTENSIVE IN MARXIST THEORY AND PRACTICE:** Monday, July 16-Friday, July 27, 6:30-9:30 p.m., and Saturday, July 21, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The summer intensive is an opportunity to immerse yourself in Marxist theory and meet activists from all over the U.S. and the world. Tuition: \$200; limited scholarships. For further information, contact the New York Marxist School, 79 Leonard St. New York, NY 10011, (212) 941-0332.

### SAN FRANCISCO, CA

July 6-7

**PUTTING PROGRESSIVE POLITICS INTO PRACTICE.** The 4th annual Bertha Reynolds Society National Conference of Progressive Workers in Social Welfare: Chauncey Alexander; Berkeley Mayor Loni Hancock; Elena Zuniga, International Representative from Nicaraguan Association of Social Workers; and many others. For registration material write BCRS c/o SFSU Department of Social Work, 1600 Holloway, San Francisco, CA 94132.

### BRYN MAWR, PA

August 3-5

**CELEBRATION OF CONSCIENCE**—a gathering commemorating 50 years of continuing witness against war, and the witness must never end! Dave Dellinger, Eva Michel, Parren Mitchell speaking, Holly Near singing. Regional conferences are scheduled in Indiana, Kansas and the West Coast. Associated events, meetings, exhibits and publications are also scheduled. For free information and registration materials, contact Celebration of Conscience, Suite 750, 1601 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20009-1035, (202) 483-4514.

### SOVIET UNION

Summer 1990

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The Central American Labor Defense Network seeks a half-time **COORDINATOR** for its urgent action network in defense of Central American unionists. Writing and organizing skills required. Some knowledge of U.S. labor movement and Central America preferred. Contact CALDN Search Committee, Box 28014, Oakland, CA 94604, (415) 272-9951.

*The Guardian*, a 42-year-old independent, racial newsweekly, currently seeks individuals for the following positions: **NEWS EDITOR** to plan and edit *The Guardian's* domestic news section. Ties with the progressive movement and familiarity with a broad range of issues required. **PHOTO/GRAPHICS EDITOR** to work with photographers and artists, make assignments and select art for each issue. Must be well-organized. Experience preferred. **SUSTAINER PROGRAM COORDINATOR** to maintain records and correspondence with Sustainers. Experience in computer database management helpful. *The Guardian* is a political cooperative and although pay is low, there are good medical benefits. *The Guardian* is an equal opportunity employer, and Third World people, women, lesbians and gay men are strongly encouraged to apply. Agreement with *The Guardian's* general political outlook required. Send resume and summary of political experience to: Guardian Coordinating Committee, 33 W. 17th St., New York, NY 10011, (212) 691-0404.

Pledge of Resistance seeks **NATIONAL COORDINATOR** beginning August 15 in new national office in Bay Area. Health care, paid vacation, childcare, \$18K/year. Send resumes to: Darla Rucker, 4228 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, CA 94609, (415) 655-1181.

**SENIOR EDITOR**. Washington, D.C.-based environmental and disarmament magazine seeks Sr. Ed. to generate and plan stories, write, edit, assist with design, layout and proofreading, and supervise interns. Must have 3-5 years journalistic experience, be a quick writer, editor and thinker, and enjoy team work. Salary in the 20s (negotiable) plus benefits. Some travel. Send resume, clips and 2 references by June 25 to: R. Schaeffer, Greenpeace Magazine, 1436 U St. NW, Washington, DC 20009. NO CALLS. Minorities and women are strongly encouraged to apply.

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## C L A S S I F I E D S

\$25,000 plus benefits. **YOUTH OUTREACH PROGRAM DIRECTOR**. Duties: Develop resources and maintain counselors-activist network. Qualifications: Organizing/communication skills. Salary: \$20,000 plus benefits. To apply: Contact Ms. Smith, CCCO, 2208 South St., Philadelphia, PA 19146, (215) 545-4626 for job description. **PROGRAM/DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**. Duties: Fundraising, financial management and program coordination in San Francisco. Qualifications: Strong management, fundraising and organizational skills. Salary: \$20,000 plus benefits. To apply: submit resume and cover letter to: Gary Wolf, CCCO Western Region, Box 42249, San Francisco, CA 94142.

**GREENPEACE**, the international environmental and disarmament organization, is seeking an **ATMOSPHERE AND ENERGY CAMPAIGNER** to work on issues of global climate change, transportation policy, energy efficiency and ozone depletion. The Midwest campaigner will organize regional efforts from the Chicago office as part of a national team. Responsibilities: organize public support, research and write campaign materials, create and coordinate direct actions, represent Greenpeace with the media and at public hearings. Qualifications: strong organizing and direct-action experience; good strategic and political skills; research and writing ability; computer literacy. Familiarity with energy and environmental issues desirable. Ability to travel. Salary DOE. Send resume to: Sharon Pines, Regional Director, Greenpeace, 1017 W. Jackson, Chicago, IL 60607. Women and minorities encouraged to apply.

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**THE NATIONAL TOXICS CAMPAIGN FUND**, a national grassroots environmental organization with a budget of \$1.5 million, seeks a **DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**. Person will originate, coordinate and manage development activity (direct mail/phone/individual donor/foundations) for national and regional offices. Salary commensurate with experience. EOE. Send resumes to: Gary Cohen, National Toxics Campaign Fund, 1168 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

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**JEWISH CURRENTS**, June 1990 issue. "American Jews Criticizing Israeli Policies," editorial; "Why Socialism Now?" a symposium; "Jewish Fiction Roundup," Roger B. Goodman; "From Old Left to New Left," A.B. Magil; "Aaron Kramer and Our Yiddish Heritage," Max Rosenfeld. Single issue: \$2. Subscription: \$20 yearly (USA) **JEWISH CURRENTS**, Dept. T, Suite 601, 22 E. 17th St., New York, NY 10003.

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# MEMO: Confidential

By Peter Friederici

**To:** Buck Mayker, Chief Executive Officer, Toxicorp Widget Company

**From:** Ace Huckster, Consultant, Good Vibes Public Relations Consultants

**Re:** "Green consuming"

**Background:** On April 22, Toxicorp's competitor, American Widgets Inc., introduced "Green Widget," claiming that manufacturing process produces 30 percent less toxic waste than that of conventional widget. Product is packaged in paper, not plastic. Though "Green Widget" retail prices average 18 percent higher than conventional widgets, "Green Widget" has attained 28 percent of market share in only four months.

Additionally, sales of "How to Save the Planet" guides are booming. Consumers seem eager to feel they are doing all they can to solve environmental problems. Undercover research has revealed titles of new guides to be released this fall:

- *99 Ways to a Slimmer Figure and Healthier Planet*
- *Green Consuming: Good for the Earth*
- *It's All Your Fault: How Shoppers Created the Environmental Crisis*

**Suggested response:** Toxicorp should react to consumer interest in "green" products and to success of "Green Widget." Toxicorp should introduce own version of "Green Widget." Some visible aspect of manufacture should seem more environmentally benign than current manufacturing process. Packaging should seem ecologically sensitive: paper packaging is recommended, though not essential. Green colors and earth tones should predominate.

Introduction of product would have dual benefits:

- greater profits
- deflection of public attention from Toxicorp toxic-waste controversies to consumers' responsibility for environmental problems. Tarnished public image could be "cleaned up."

As "Green Widget" is a trademarked term, Toxicorp needs to introduce own product name. Suggestions for name include:

- Chartreuse Widget (name could lead to boycott by anti-alcohol advocates, though)
- Lime Widget
- Jade Widget (name could intimidate economy-minded consumers)
- Leafy Widget (suggests peaceful, pastoral frame of mind conducive to relaxed shopping and spending)
- Earth Widget (generic, but still our choice; has broad appeal)

**Advertising:** Advertising campaign should emphasize that buying Earth Widget is beneficial to the environment. Ads should point out that Toxicorp is making sacrifices to produce this produce (by producing less toxic waste, not using animal testing or not using old-growth forest products, for example— but note that sacrifices need not be difficult to make), so

consumers can be "guilt-tripped" to make their own sacrifice (i.e., paying higher price) to buy product.

Possible slogans include:

- "You Can Afford to Save the Planet With the New Earth Widget!"
- "The More You Buy, the More You Save (the Planet)!"
- "With the New Earth Widget, You Can Save the Planet Every Time You Shop!"

We suggest a broad-based media campaign. Campaign should begin prior to product introduction, with print and broadcast advertisements that proclaim (for example): "Beginning [date of product introduction], you can save the world at your local shopping center!" Ads should create sense of anticipation, while leaving some aura of mystery about what product is/does.

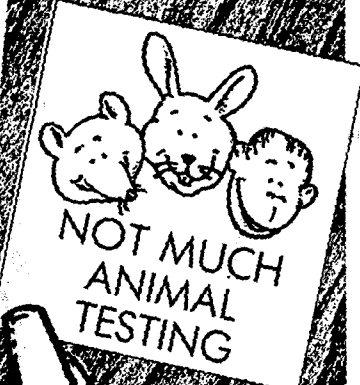
After product introduction, new print/broadcast ads should emphasize that since manufacture of Earth Widget is beneficial to the environment, consumers should buy as many as possible. Endorsements by celebrities or attractive models would be desirable (sample testimony: "I use the Earth Widget. And I feel really good about myself"). By using testimonials from a variety of character types, campaign can appeal to different segments of market. (Of course, ads should also emphasize quality of product—because of Toxicorp's foresight, consumers can have both quality product and a good conscience.)

Toxicorp should further stimulate demand (and improve public image) by very visibly donating money (amount need not be great) to non-controversial environmental charity. Specifying that amount donated will be a percentage of profit from every Earth Widget should stimulate demand by conscience-minded consumers.

Ads encouraging consumers to buy Earth Widget should be supplemented with series of "thoughtful" ads in serious print media. Series should explain Toxicorp's commitment to environmental protection without explicitly asking consumers to buy Earth Widgets. This campaign would greatly improve Toxicorp public relations by creating image of company as "good corporate citizen" willing to spend ad dollars on public-education campaign. Ads should emphasize that Toxicorp has always been committed to environmental protection and was involved in several well-publicized pollution controversies only because of huge consumer demand for Toxicorp widgets. To meet the new consumer demand, though, Toxicorp is now glad to be a leader in the quest for cleaner industry. With new Earth Widget, Toxicorp can supply consumer demand and clean up the environment.

**Further responses:** Good Vibes will report in next memo on suggestions for name change from "Toxicorp" to (for example) "EarthCo" or "HealthCo." ■

Peter Friederici is a writer living in Chicago.



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